

Competing Audio-visual Industries: A business history of the influence of SABC- TV on the Afrikaans cinematic film industry, c.1976-c.1986

by
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THESIS DECLARATION

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ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Historical research frequently requires investigations that have ethical dimensions. Although not to the same extent as in medical experimentation, for example, the social sciences do entail addressing ethical considerations. This research is conducted at the University of Stellenbosch and, as such, must be managed according to the institution's Framework Policy for the Assurance and Promotion of Ethically Accountable Research at Stellenbosch University. The policy stipulates that all accumulated data must be used for academic purposes exclusively. This study relies on social sources and ensures that the university's policy on the values and principles of non-maleficence, scientific validity and integrity is followed. All participating oral sources were informed on the objectives of the study, the nature of the interviews (such as the use of a tape recorder) and the relevance of their involvement. The information offered was used on condition that the participants gave their consent.

ABSTRACT

This thesis endeavours to detail the business history of the Afrikaans cinematic film industry and the economic influence of the South African Broadcasting Corporation's¹ Television Service on the Afrikaans cinematic film industry over the period 1976 to 1986. The introduction of TV services in countries abroad had a profound (often detrimental) influence on their respective cinematic film industries. It would clearly be wrong to argue that these countries experienced identical influences. Each country has a distinctive political, cultural and socio-economic framework/context in which its industries operate, therefore creating sets of challenges for industries attempting to adhere to the prevailing conditions. South Africa was no exception, though the emphasis of this thesis is on the Afrikaans cinematic film industry, since Afrikaners dominated the local industry (regarding film production, distribution and screening)² when South Africa's television services commenced in 1975.

Numerous factors stemming from South Africa's pre-Television era contributed to the Afrikaner's dominance of South African cinema, including the role of the apartheid state (for example, censorship regulations and the film subsidy scheme), the demands of the local and international market, foreign competition and, naturally, the ambitions and business approaches of the Afrikaans cinematic film companies. As such, the symbiotic relationship between these forces is reflected upon so as to illustrate the formation, progression and characteristics of the industry when it attempted to adapt to the impact of local TV services. Accordingly, the advent, birth and progression of the SABC and its TV services are examined. National TV was introduced in South Africa only in 1976 - relatively late considering the country was the economic power-house of the African continent and that its much smaller and subordinate neighbouring state, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), had already been transmitting TV broadcasts from 1960. Therefore, this research also examines whether the Afrikaans cinematic film industry could utilise foreign countries as case studies to develop and implement strategies, which could counter the financial threats posed by television.

The timeframe covered in this reflection stretches from 1895 (the birth of South Africa's cinematic industry) to 1986, as Electronic Media Network (M-Net), South Africa's first independent Pay-TV service, was introduced in October of that year – thus transforming the face of SA's TV industry. The focal point of the study is the impact of SABC-TV on Afrikaans

¹ South Africa's public broadcaster.

² See terminology list.

film-making, since the government asserted a substantial degree of control over the public broadcaster, whilst the Afrikaans cinematic film industry (particularly its film producers) was heavily dependent on the financial assistance of the state. Assistance that was given as cinema presented government with an audio-visual mechanism to distribute its socio-cultural and political values and aims.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie tesis poog om die besigheidsgeskiedenis van die Afrikaanse bioskoopbedryf te bespreek en die ekonomiese invloed van die Suid-Afrikaanse Uitsaaikorporasie se Televisiedienste op die Afrikaanse bioskoopbedryf in die periode 1976 tot 1986 te verduidelik. Die instelling van TV-dienste in die buiteland het diepgaande invloede (dikwels negatief) op hul onderskeie bioskoop industrieë gehad. Die invloede was nie identies nie, aangesien elke land 'n unieke politieke, kulturele, sosiale en ekonomiese raamwerk/konteks het waarin hul industrieë gefunksioneer het. Suid-Afrika was geen uitsondering nie. Hierdie tesis fokus op die Afrikaanse bioskoop bedryf, aangesien die plaaslike bedryf tydens die instelling van Televisie in Suid-Afrika deur Afrikaners oorheers was (met betrekking tot rolprent vervaardiging, verspreiding en vertoning).

Talle faktore, voor die koms van plaaslike TV, het bygedra tot Afrikaners se beheer, insluitende die rol vervul deur die Apartheid staat (byvoorbeeld sensuur regulasies en die film subsidie-skema), die vraag van die plaaslike en internasionale mark, buitelandse mededinging en natuurlik, die motiewe en sake benaderings van die Afrikaanse bioskoop maatskappye. Die simbiotiese verhouding en wisselwerking tussen hierdie faktore word ondersoek om die vorming, verloop en karaktereenskappe wat die bedryf met die instelling van Suid-Afrikaanse Televisie vertoon het, te illustreer. Die koms en ontwikkeling van die SABC en sy TV-dienste word belig. Suid-Afrikaanse TV-dienste het egter eers in 1976 'n werklikheid geword- relatief laat as in ag geneem word dat die land die ekonomiese dinamoo van Afrika was en sy veel kleiner en ondergeskikte buurstaat, Rhodesië (Zimbabwe), reeds in 1960 TV ingestel het. Die studie ondersoek ook die mate waarin die Afrikaanse bioskoopbedryf buitelandse ervarings as modelle gebruik het om strategieë te ontwikkel wat die finansiële bedreigings van Televisie kon teenwerk.

Die periode wat in hierdie analise gedek word, strek vanaf 1895 (die ontstaan van die Suid-Afrikaanse bioskoop bedryf) tot 1986, aangesien Electronic Media Network (M-Net), Suid-Afrika se eerste onafhanklike subskripsie TV-diens, in Oktober van dieselfde jaar bekendgestel

is – ‘n ontwikkeling wat die aanskyn van SA se TV-industrie verander het. Die fokuspunt van die studie val op die impak van SABC-TV, ‘n staatsinstelling waaroor die Suid-Afrikaanse regering, ‘n aansienlike mate van beheer uitgeoefen het, terwyl die Afrikaanse filmbedryf (spesifiek die rolprentvervaardigers) terselfdertyd geweldig afhanklik was van finansiële ondersteuning deur die Staat. Hulp wat verskaf is, weens die potensiaal van die bioskoopbedryf om die staat se sosiale, kulturele en politieke waardes en doelwitte te bevorder.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late grandfather, Coenraad Johannes van Dyk (1929-2014).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABC:	African Broadcasting Company
ACF:	African Consolidated Films
AFP:	African Film Productions
AHI:	Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut
ANC:	African National Congress
BBC:	British Broadcasting Corporation
BFFPA:	Black Feature Film Producers Association
BIC:	Bantu Investment Corporation
Bonuskor:	Bonus Beleggings Korporasie van Suid-Afrika
CARFO:	Christelike Afrikaanse Radio en Film Organisasie
CBS:	Columbia Broadcasting Services
CIC:	Cinema International Corporation
COMSAT:	Communications Satellite Corporation
CPBC:	Cape Peninsula Broadcasting Company
FAK:	Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings
FVB:	Federale Volksbeleggings Beperk
GBO:	Gross Box Office Returns
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GHA:	Genootskap vir die Handhawing van Afrikaans
HNP:	Herstigte Nasionale Party
HSRC:	Human Sciences Research Council
INTELSAT:	International Telecommunications Satellite Consortium
ITV:	Independent Television
KWV:	Koöperatiewe Wijnbouwers Vereeniging
MGM:	Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer
MK:	uMkhonto we Sizwe
M-Net:	Electronic Media Network
MPEA:	Motion Picture Export Association
MPPA:	Motion Picture Producers Association
MPPC:	Motion Picture Patents Company
NBC:	National Broadcasting Company
NBO:	Net Box Office Returns
NCI:	National Cinematographic Institute

NFB:	National Film Board
NFC:	Nordisk Film Company
NGK:	Nederduitse-Gereformeerde Kerk
NOK:	Nywerheidsontwikkelingskorporasie van SA Bpk
NP:	National Party
NTSC-system:	National Television System Committee
OPEC:	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PAL-system:	Phase Alternating Line
PCB:	Publications Control Board
PNP:	Purified National Party
RARO:	Reddingsdaadbond-Amateur-Rolprent-Organisasie
RDB:	Reddingsdaadbond
RKO:	Radio-Keith-Orpheum
SABC:	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SADF:	South African Defence Force
Sanlam:	Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Lewensassuransimaatskappy
Santam:	Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Trust-en Assuransimaatskappy
SAP:	South African Party
SAPA:	South African Press Association
Satbel:	Suid-Afrikaanse Teater Belange (Eiendoms) Beperk
SATV:	South African Television
SECAM-system:	Sequential Colour with Memory
SWAPO:	South-West Africa People's Organization
TAC:	Technical Advisory Committee
TV:	Television
UN:	United Nations
UNITA:	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UP:	United South African National Party
VOB:	Volksbioskope Maatskappy Beperk
VVRSA:	Vereniging van Vollengte Rolprentvervaardigers van Suid-Afrika

TERMINOLOGY

Cinema (Bioscope): A motion-picture/movie theatre.

Film industry: Commercial and technological bodies involving all aspects of film production, distribution and screening within the industry.

Cinematic film industry: Commercial and technical institutions within an industry, which produce, distribute and/or exhibit films specifically for cinematic purposes (may also be referred to as the cinematic industry).

Cinematic film producer/-maker (may refer to a person [independent] or production company): The coordinators of films produced for cinematic distribution and screening. Producers, therefore, are (or employ individuals who are) responsible for overseeing, for example, the creation of scripts, as well as the directing, editing and financing of a production. If needed, producers may appoint an executive producer(s), who (in most cases) funds or attracts investors to the creation of a production, yet they do not make technical contributions.

Cinematic film distributor: Companies who dictate a motion picture's marketing policies, release dates, media (such as television, home video, DVD and [in this case] cinemas) and means by which films are exhibited and circulated. Often seen as the "middleman", contracts are secured between the distributor and exhibitor, specifying the percentage that exhibitors can collect from gross ticket sales. After auditing the ticket sales, the distributor collects its share, submits the screener's share and transfers the rest to the film production company. Therefore, film distributing companies fulfil a significant function regarding the financing of a motion picture. Motion pictures are usually selected for distribution based on their potential profitability. In many instances, cinemas are owned by distributing companies themselves

Cinematic film exhibitor (screener): Exhibitors are owners of movie theatres, such as "four-wall" cinemas and/or drive-ins. Exhibitors are usually categorised into two groups, namely theatres that are owned by distributors (see cinematic film distributor) and those managed by independent owners.

Afrikaans cinematic film industry: A section of South Africa's cinematic film industry owned by Afrikaners (may be refer to as Afrikaans cinema).

INTRODUCTION

“How can I know what I think until I see what I say?” - Karl E. Weick¹

The Afrikaans cinematic film industry and the SABC’s television service

“The mistakes of other countries were thoroughly investigated by local filmmakers and when the television service was introduced at the start of 1976, they were prepared. This, however, did not prevent large [local] production companies – such as *Kavaliers* and Killarney Films – being forced into making drastic changes. In their case, they became part of the Satbel group... Avid moviegoers simply stayed home at night and watched television.”²

These statements in André I. le Roux and Lilla Fourie’s *Filmverlede: Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm* (1982) prompted the research for this thesis. Though short, the paragraph contains a lot of information to process. Considering that the account was written over three decades ago, the assumption may be drawn that quite a few questions will be raised as well. Particularly younger generations as, for example, three names listed, i.e. “Kavaliers”, “Killarney Films” and “Satbel group”, are not names synonymous with the current South African cinematic film industry. Arguably, the most important questions are *what* were the “drastic changes” and *why* were they made if the industry was “prepared”.

In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to identify the conditions which surrounded and ultimately shaped the inner workings of the Afrikaans cinematic film production, distribution and exhibition industries, and later the SABC’s TV service and the latter’s influence on the former. During this researcher’s evaluation of resources to formulate an adequate hypothesis and conclusion, it quickly became clear that both the histories of the Afrikaans cinematic film industry and the SABC, during South Africa’s pre-Television era, necessitated a detailed discussion. The fact that this thesis may become lopsided as a result was greatly considered. However, a complicated and intertwined web of political, economic, social, cultural, geographical, managerial and technological issues within and surrounding not only the Afrikaans cinematic film industry, but also the SABC during 1895-1975 had monumental implications regarding SABC-TV’s influence on the Afrikaans cinematic film industry. Therefore, the pre-Television era serves as the foundation of this thesis and the period from 1976 (the year in which SABC-TV was launched) to 1986 as the climax.

¹ Karl E. Weick, *Sensemaking in Organizations*, (London: SAGE Publications, 1995), p. 18.

² Translated from Andre I. Le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm* (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 196.

In brief, the formation of the South African film industry can be traced back to the late 1800s. However, few Afrikaners participated in the industry's activities in this early period and the Afrikaans cinematic film industry only truly came into its own – as will be elaborated on later – after 1956, i.e. the year the National Party (at the time South Africa's ruling party) introduced a subsidy scheme, thus providing local producers financial assistance based on a film's box office performances.³ Simply stated, the government's scheme was introduced as local producers struggled to compete with motion pictures produced by foreign (especially American) companies. In addition, the government utilised the content of local films to subtly convey messages in line with their own ambitions. The incentive seemed promising at first as local cinematic film producers – most notably *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* – rose to prominence. Until the late 1960s South Africa's cinematic film distribution and exhibition networks remained largely controlled by American companies, in particular the Twentieth-Century-Fox Film Corporation. However, prominent Afrikaans insurance company, Sanlam, in a joint business venture with the Schlesinger Organisation, acquired Twentieth-Century-Fox's shares. Consequently, *Suid-Afrikaanse Teater Belange Beperk* (Satbel) was formed to administer the partnership's distribution and exhibition interests, Ster Theatres/Films and Kinekor. The Afrikaans cinematic film industry continuously expanded and ultimately came to dominate South African cinema, with cinematic film production peaking in 1975 (regarding the quantity of motion pictures produced). When the public broadcaster's official TV broadcasts commenced the following year (after much deliberation between the government and the SABC), box office revenues generated by motion pictures, with a few exceptions such as Jamie Uys's *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980), failed to match those of the pre-TV era. Congruently, the climate for distributors and screeners, above all the drive-in industry, became more arduous and led, for example, to Ster Films/Theatres and Kinekor's merger. The drive-in industry has now virtually disappeared in South Africa. Television's popularity amongst White South Africans (the niche market for the Afrikaans cinematic film industry) far exceeded expectations, as will be demonstrated statistically. Naturally, when discussing the dynamics of any industry. Its products also requires examination and evaluation. Afrikaans cinematic film productions of the time are, with a few exceptions, generally perceived as forgettable, lacking substance and/or inferior to foreign motion pictures. This is a perception which stems from the producers' exploitation of the subsidy scheme, the country's strict censorship regulations, the resolute

³ "Box office" refers to the commercial performance of a motion picture in terms of audience size and/or takings earned.

support of the local market and the roles played by South Africa's larger distributors and exhibitors.

Despite being one of the oldest in the world, South Africa's cinematic film industry and the films it produced during the pre-1994 era has, says Martin Botha, only been documented in a "surprisingly" few number of books.⁴ Thelma Gutsche's *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa: 1985-1940* (1972) provides an excellent and detailed account of the birth and early progress of South Africa's film industry. *Filmverlede: Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm* (1982), fulfils two primary functions. Their book presents a chronological account of South African film, whilst endeavouring to serve as a starting point for those attempting to research the film history of the country. Other important studies include Isabel Balseiro and Ntongela Masilela's *To Change Reels: Film and Film Culture in South Africa* (2003), Jacqueline Maingard's *South African National Cinema* (2007) and Eustacia J. Riley's dissertation, *From Matieland to Mothercity: Landscape, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989* (2012). Keyan Tomaselli's *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film* (1989) and Johan Blignaut and Martin Botha's *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991* (1992) all made valuable contributions to this thesis. The reason is that evaluations of the country's cinematic past generally tend to emphasise film producers and/or the motion pictures they release. *Cinema of Apartheid* and *Movies Moguls Mavericks* are comprehensive, as the inner workings of the country's distribution and exhibition industries of the past are also expanded upon in greater detail. These qualities are also found in David J. Garner's dissertation, *Hollywood, African Consolidated Films and "Bioskoopbeskawing", or Bioscope Culture: Aspects of American Culture in Cape Town, 1945-1960* (2000). Leon van Nierop's *Daar doer in die fliiek: 'n Persoonlike blik op die geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse rolprent* (2016), focuses, like this thesis, on the Afrikaans industry. His personal views, considering that Van Nierop is a renowned filmmaker and film critic in the Afrikaans community, offer unique and valuable insights into this section of the country's cinematic past. When researching themes involving South Africa's cinema, one has to consult the numerous works by Martin Botha, as he has published over 200 articles and reports (including five books) on South African media.⁵ Apart from *Movies Moguls Mavericks*, Botha's publications include *Kronieken van Zuid-Afrika: de*

⁴ Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1896-2010*, (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 8.

⁵ The Centre for Film and Media Studies, "Staff: A/Prof Martin Botha", Accessed: 22 March 2017: <http://www.cfms.uct.ac.za/fam/staff/botha>.

films van Manie van Rensburg (1997) and *Jans Rautenbach: Dromer, Baanbreker en Auteur* (2006) – books dedicated to the works of prominent Afrikaans film directors. *South African Cinema, 1896-2010* (2012), arguably one of his most ambitious undertakings, successfully illustrates and examines significant events of the country's cinematic past against the backdrop of South Africa's socio-political context.

Since television was introduced in South Africa in the 1970s, the Afrikaans cinematic film industry had the opportunity to formulate their business undertakings according to examples presented by foreign industries. Similarly, numerous books and articles detailing the impact of television on foreign industries were considered in this thesis. Some valuable works include David Robinson's *World Cinema: A Short History* (1973) and Eric Rhodes's *A History of the Cinema from its Origins to 1970* (1976). Both accounts provide comprehensive histories of cinema from its early days, as well as dealing with films and the most significant companies that produced, distributed and screened them, including – for example – the interconnectivity of the global cinematic industries, the factors that led to the USA's domination of the global industry, the influence of the First and Second World Wars and, of course, the impact of television. *World Cinema: A Short History* and *A History of the Cinema from its Origins to 1970*, as with *Filmverlede*, can be recommended for those attempting to research the various fields of film history for the first time. Although Douglas Gomery specifically references the USA, his article "The Coming of Television and the 'Lost' Motion Picture Audience" (1985), demonstrates that the impact of television on cinematic film industries can only be adequately defined when external socio-economic complexities influencing, for example, consumer patterns are considered.

Some of the abovementioned studies have touched on the influence of SABC-TV on the Afrikaans cinematic film industry. However, there is still an academic void as there is as yet no comprehensive study – particularly one with a business-oriented approach, detailing the roots of the influence (i.e. the workings of the SABC and its TV service), presented with sufficient statistical evidence of SATV's impact. This study ventures into the void.

This thesis examines the complexities of South Africa's cinematic film industry during the apartheid era. It can be regarded as a business history as it emphasises the history of business organisations, methods, competition and relations, as well as the dynamics of the market and government regulations. Furthermore, it reflects on the Afrikaans cinematic film production, distribution and exhibition industries, their relationships with one another and the forces that

shaped their respective developments. The history of *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies/Kavalier Films* (a filmmaking company) is utilised as a case study as the company was once the leading Afrikaans cinematic film producer. In addition, a few films (produced before and during South Africa's TV era) are presented as examples to demonstrate the features of the industry. After giving an account of the history and factors that moulded the characteristics of the SABC's TV service, the qualities of the products offered by both industries can be examined and compared. The Afrikaans cinematic film industry's ability to adapt, however, is the paramount focus of the study. The study initially aimed to cover a longer timeframe, i.e. up to 1994 as apartheid had come to an end and the impact of M-Net's service, as well as local and foreign film producers' exploitation of South Africa's tax regulations,⁶ could have been included. However, financial restrictions (for example, living and traveling costs) limited the period of study and the information presented would not have sufficed. Nonetheless, by excluding South Africa's first Pay-TV service, a case study can be provided that investigates exclusively the influences of TV broadcasts highly regulated by the state.

The topical data have been accumulated, interpreted and analysed through exploratory research of mainly primary sources, most of which are to be found at some key locations. The first is the National Archives Repository (public records of South Africa's central government since 1910) in Pretoria/Tshwane. The past involvement of government (whether it be a body, organisation or individual) in the Afrikaans cinematic film industry is preserved at the archives and available for public use. The archives proved to be a vital resource, considering that the government (particularly the Department of Trade and Industries) played a significant role in the developments of the local industry with the provision of film subsidies, while censorship regulations were administered by the Publications Control Board. Subsidies, for example, were continuously amended after their introduction in 1956 based on the successes and failures of the industry. In order to amend the scheme, it was necessary to accumulate statistics, data, complaints or suggestions related to the cinematic film industry – all of which are preserved at the repository in the form of memorandums, correspondence, financial statements, reports, minutes and or newspapers/journal articles. Accordingly, information on the introduction and progress of the SABC's TV service are preserved as well. However, most of the data regarding the SABC and its TV service were found at the media library at the headquarters of the SABC

⁶ Nearly 600 productions were produced between 1986 and 1989. Section 11 of the Income Tax Act, designed to encourage exports, allowed exporters to deduct their marketing expenses against tax, followed by another deduction between 50% and 100% based on box office takings. Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut's *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 119 and p. 121.

in Auckland Park, Johannesburg. The corporation's annual reports (1937-1990) proved to be most significant. Research was also conducted at the Stellenbosch University Gericke Library Centre for Documents. Details regarding *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies (Kavalier Films)* are retrievable in the HB Thom collection. HB Thom, a prominent academic and former Rector of the University of Stellenbosch, served on the Board of Directors of the company, whilst acting as the head of the production company's script committee.⁷ The history of the company, extending from its formation to its incorporation into Satbel, is presented in agendas, memoranda, minutes, financial statements, correspondence and scripts. Much of the information regarding South Africa's distribution and exhibition industries were gathered from Sanlam's head office in Bellville, as Satbel was a subsidiary of the life insurance giant. Unfortunately, personal access to Sanlam's archives was denied; however, information was sent via e-mail by Sanlam's Archivist, Catherine Snel. In addition, events reported in newspapers, such as *Die Burger*, *SA Film Weekly*, *Volkshandel* and *Die Transvaler*, were examined. The majority of primary sources used were Afrikaans and hence the quotations presented in this thesis were translated into English to improve readability. However, some terms (referring, for example, to the names of companies, organisations, bodies and/or those difficult to translate) remain in Afrikaans so as to retain an authentic feel. In these cases, the terms are translated or defined in the footnotes.

Social sources – communicated orally or otherwise – fulfil an important function in this study. Those consulted are individuals who were directly involved in either one or both of South Africa's cinematic film and television industries during the timeframe investigated. There are nonetheless inherent risks when utilising oral sources, such as the generalisability and subjectivity of statements made. As a result, the data accumulated during the course of this study were compared to and complemented by other collated primary and secondary sources in an attempt to ensure objective and thorough research. Despite primary sources contributing most of the data, the use of secondary sources was essential for the thesis. Areas of this study adequately researched by scholars, for example, the early development of South Africa's cinematic film industry discussed by Thelma Gutsche, Martin Botha and numerous others, or the political debate concerning the introduction of South African television, were consulted and referred to. Secondary sources are also utilised in the elaboration of external conditions that influenced both industries, for example, the operations of foreign film industries, the

⁷ This point is expanded upon in Chapter Two.

Afrikaners' socio-economic advances during the 20th century and South Africa's Border War (1966-1990).

Chapter Layout

Chapter One provides a historical overview of the forces that shaped the development of the Afrikaans cinematic film industry during and after the 1950s. Three topics are broadly discussed, i.e. the birth and development of the global cinematic film industry, the socio-economic progress of the Afrikaner during the first half of the 20th century and the development of the South African cinematic film industry from 1895 to 1956 (the year in which the South African government introduced the film subsidy scheme).

The second chapter expands on the progress of the Afrikaans cinematic film industry after subsidies were made available to South Africa's cinematic film producers. The effects and objectives of the government's subsidy scheme, as well as South Africa's censorship regulations, the local and international markets, and Sanlam's acquisition of the lion's share of the country's distribution and screening network are discussed. A short business history of *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* (later known as *Kavalier Films*) and the films they produced will be utilised as a case study. The timeframe covered in this section extends from 1956 to 1970, as the introduction of South African television was officially announced the following year.

Chapter Three reflects on the advent of the SABC's TV service in South Africa. It details the early beginnings of television and broadcasting, the formation of the SABC in 1936, the South African government's reluctance to introduce the service and the investigation that ultimately approved the implementation of a television service.

Chapter Four is devoted to South Africa's - more specifically the SABC and the Afrikaans cinematic film industry's - preparations for the country's TV service – more specifically with reference to the SABC and the Afrikaans cinematic film industry. Chapter Five, the most significant, details the influence of South African television on the Afrikaans cinematic film industry after the television service had been formally introduced in January 1976. This impact is demonstrated by elaborating on the developments of both SABC-TV and the Afrikaans cinematic film industry from 1976 to 1986. The conclusion sums up the findings of the research.

Chapter One: Afrikaner Economic Advancement and an Overview of the South African Cinematic Film Industry,¹ c.1895- c.1956

“Technological change creates new social environments with new values, ethics, morals and aspirations. In most cases the transition to the new way is difficult. Sometimes it is dangerous” – James Burke²

Introduction

The South African cinematic film industry emerged during the late 19th century, making it one of the oldest industries in the world. However, the socio-economic and political conditions of South Africa- as a British dominion during the early part of the twentieth century shaped an industry which largely excluded Afrikaners. A fully-fledged Afrikaans cinematic film industry therefore only emerged in the 1950s after state intervention was initiated by means of government subsidies. This section, therefore, outlines the conditions from which the Afrikaans cinematic film industry originated. The period 1895-1956 is relevant in this regard, i.e. from the birth of the global cinematic film industry to the introduction of government film subsidies in South Africa. It is this researcher’s opinion that in order to understand the Afrikaans cinematic film industry’s adaptation to the influence of SABC-TV, the industry itself (including its origins) has to be comprehended. First, a short history of the global industry will be presented, with attention focused on the Hollywood industry primarily.³ This will be followed by a discussion of the economic rise of the Afrikaner during the twentieth century to indicate the reasons for the Afrikaner’s initial reluctance and/or inability to engage with an industry as modern as cinema. Lastly, an overview of South Africa’s cinematic film industry will be provided to illustrate the origins and progress of the local film industry,⁴ the market’s domination by foreign interests, and how Afrikaans producers utilised the socio-political context to establish a new Afrikaner enterprise.

A Short History of the Origins of the Global Cinematic Film Industry, 1895-1940⁵

¹ May also be referred to as “cinematic industry” (see “Terminology”).

² James Burke, Foreword to *Pandora’s Box: Social and Professional Issues of the Information Age*, Andréw A. Adams and Rachel J. McCrindle, (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2010), p. xxii.

³ The American cinematic film industry had a profound influence on shaping the South African industry.

⁴ The term “cinematic film industry” refers to a division within the “film industry”. For example, the television industry and the cinematic film industry (where films are distributed and exhibited in drive-ins, indoor cinemas, school halls etc.) are two different entities, yet both form part of the South African film industry.

⁵ This chapter does not in any sense try to provide a complete history of the global industry. It will only highlight some of the most significant events. Its focus falls not on the film themselves, but on the industry that created them. For a detailed account of the emergence of the global cinematic industry, see David Robinson’s *World Cinema: A Short History* (1973) or Eric Rhode’s *A History of the Cinema: From its Origins to 1970*.

Film historian David Robinson (author of *World Cinema: A Short History*) considers the development of the cinematic film industry as a complex evolution which “involves an aesthetic, a technology, an economy and an audience: and all four of these elements will condition what moving images appear upon the screen at any particular place and in any particular period.”⁶ These conditions applied to the development of the Afrikaans cinematic industry; however, a fifth element of the utmost importance should be included, namely the political context (in many cases dictated by cultural conditions) within which the industry operates – as with all industries in South Africa during the twentieth century. During the advent of the cinematic film industry displaying moving images, such as Thomas Edison’s kinetograph⁷ or the Lumière brothers’ cinematographe,⁸ was generally perceived as a novelty, a “trick or gadget”, which nevertheless attracted large audiences during the 1890s.⁹ The Lumière brothers of Lyon, France, employed operators, who would display images projected by the cinematographe in upscale theatres across the world, thus targeting the bourgeoisie.¹⁰ The Lumière brothers constructed the first permanent cinema theatre in 1897.¹¹ Simultaneously, travelling cinemas emerged as itinerant showmen would utilise tents or mobile theatres which, for short periods of time, exhibited short films for the general public in villages or towns.¹² What distinguished the USA from countries such as Britain or France was that film established itself as a source of entertainment amongst the working class.¹³

Within two decades cinema would transform from a novelty into a major entertainment industry and an art form.¹⁴ Gerben Bakker attributes the transformation, at least in the USA, to the establishment and development of the nickelodeon.¹⁵ From 1905 to 1907 nickelodeons were emerging across the USA with approximately 10 000 such movie houses established

⁶ David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 1.

⁷ A motion picture camera, which captured movies for in-house experiments.

⁸ The invention was based on the kinetograph, but it could project images in a theatre-like setting.

⁹ Gerben Bakker, “The Economic History of the International Film Industry”, EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples, February 10, 2008, Accessed: September 8, 2016: <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-the-international-film-industry/>.

¹⁰ In subsequent years films were frequently used in vaudeville or theatrical entertainments to enhance the experience. The first show of the Lumières’ cinematographe took place on 28 December 1895 in Paris. David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 1.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁴ Eric Rhode, *A History of the Cinema from its Origins to 1970*, (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1976), p. 29.

¹⁵ The term ‘nickelodeon’ would become a generic term for the first movie houses of the period. The first nickelodeon was opened in 1905 in Pittsburgh, USA. Gerben Bakker, “The Economic History of the International Film Industry”, EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples, February 10, 2008. Accessed: September 8, 2016: <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-the-international-film-industry/>.

during the period.¹⁶ In France, due to the popularity of motion pictures, the construction of new cinema theatres dramatically increased in 1905 and 1906, whilst many halls and theatres in Britain were converted to project motion pictures. In 1908 the first theatre in England specifically designed for cinematic purposes was constructed in Lancashire (Colne).¹⁷ As demand increased, so did the number of film production companies, whilst film distribution became a business activity in its own right (often controlled by the larger film-producing companies). A figure who established firm control over the cinematic film industry during this period was Charles Pathé (1863-1957). Pathé, born in Chevry-Cossigny France, utilised vertical business integration to obtain monopolistic control of the French industry, which subsequently enabled France to become the leading/dominant nation in the global cinematic industry until the First World War (1914-1918).¹⁸

In the USA an intense struggle to gain control of the industry emerged after 1909 between production, exhibition and distribution firms.¹⁹ Competition and the ambition to control the market resulted in a considerable improvements of American productions. The dissolution of the Motion Picture Patents Company (MPPC), an American cartel that endeavoured to monopolise film distribution and production, further enhanced the quality of American motion pictures. Between 1908 and 1912 the MPPC, headed by Thomas Edison restricted film lengths and rental prices.²⁰ William Fox, founder of the Fox Film Corporation and Fox West Coast Theatres, in collaboration with the American Department of Justice, took legal action in 1912 and the power exercised by the MPPC was consequently diminished.²¹ The outbreak of war in August 1914, however, disrupted the growth of the European industries, consequently providing America with the opportunity to seize control of the world's market.²² The introduction of the "fixed" cinema transformed the cinematic film industry, when the feature film emerged.²³ Films exhibited in the USA before 1915 rarely exceeded fifteen minutes and, as such, consumers watched a succession of short motion pictures, for example, sports films,

¹⁶ David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 27.

¹⁷ The Central Hall. David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 27.

¹⁸ Vertical business integration refers to producing films, whilst also establishing an exhibition and distribution network for them. David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 28.

¹⁹ They included film companies such as Edison, Vitagraph, Selig, Biograph and French firms, Méliès and Pathé.

²⁰ David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 29.

²¹ "Independent" producers and distributors would subsequently dominate the American industry. David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 30.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 56.

²³ The minimum length of a feature film had been a topic of debate at the time. The Screen Actors Guild maintained it to be at least 80 minutes, whilst the British Film Institute and American Film institute argued that a feature film runs for 40 minutes or more. *The Story of the Kelly Gang* (1906, Australia) is generally considered as the first dramatic feature film as it was an hour long.

newsreels, dramas and comedies.²⁴ Though the price of renting a film increased, exhibitors learned that an enhancement in quality and length attracted more consumers to cinemas, enabling owners to raise admission prices, thus generating greater profits. As a result film producers made great investments by ensuring their product was of a competitive standard – none more so than the American pioneer D.W. Griffith. Griffith, a director, producer and writer, pioneered film production techniques, most notably in the controversial, *Birth of a Nation* (1915)²⁵ and *Intolerance*²⁶ (1916). Robinson argues:

“His achievement can hardly be paralleled in the history of art. From a popular mechanical entertainment he fashioned an autonomous art, giving it forms and laws that were to remain largely unchanged and unchallenged for the next fifty years.”²⁷

Some of the most prominent American film companies to emerge in the 1910s to the 1930s included Universal Studios (founded in 1912 as Universal Film Manufacturing Company), Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (a merger of Metro Pictures Corporation and Goldwyn Pictures, founded in 1924), Warner Brothers (founded in 1923 as Warner Brothers Pictures, Incorporated), Columbia (founded in 1924 as Columbia Pictures Corporation), United Artists (founded in 1919), Radio-Keith-Orpheum (RKO), Paramount Pictures Corporation (founded in 1912 as Famous Players Film Company) and Twentieth-Century-Fox (a merger of Fox Film Corporation and Twentieth-Century Pictures [founded in 1935]).²⁸ The American cinematic film companies also utilized vertical business integration in which producers and distributors acquired cinemas across the USA and the rest of the world, thus assuming firm control over the global industry. For example (and as will be expanded upon later), Twentieth-Century-Fox (Twentieth-Century-Fox Film (SA) Pty Ltd) accumulated the largest market share in South Africa from 1956-1969. As the First World War was fought on European soil, film producers

²⁴ Gerben Bakker, “The Economic History of the International Film Industry”, EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples, February 10, 2008, Accessed: September 8, 2016: <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-the-international-film-industry/>.

²⁵ *Birth of the Nation* is praised for its advances in cinematography, although its content is deemed controversial as it promotes the Ku Klux Klan. It was the highest grossing film until it was overtaken by *Gone with the Wind* (1939). Although this has been a topic of much dispute, figures suggest that the film’s box office revenue can be estimated between \$50-100 million. The cost to develop the film amounted to \$110 000. David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 63.

²⁶ *Intolerance* was by far the most expensive film to be produced up to that time (an estimated \$2,5 million in 1916). It featured monumental sets, employed over 3 000 extras and utilised advanced cinematography techniques, which enhanced Griffith’s already formidable reputation as film maker. However, the film was a commercial flop, consequently resulting in its production company Triangle Film Corporation being sold.

²⁷ David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 56.

²⁸ Eric Rhode, *A History of the Cinema from its Origins to 1970*, (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1976), p. 45-267.

there discovered that competing with the American product became problematic, as securing the required capital became increasingly difficult. Gerben Bakker, author of *Entertainment Industrialised: The Emergence of the International Film Industry, 1890-1940*, states: “Even if they would have managed, it may have been difficult to justify these lavish expenditures when people were dying in the trenches.”²⁹

However, declaring neutrality during the war provided the Nordic countries Denmark and Sweden with an advantage over their European counterparts. In Sweden prominent filmmakers, actors and directors emerged during this period – Charles Magusson (employed by the Svenska Bio Company), Mauritz Stiller (renowned for films such as *Love and Journalism* and *Thomas Graal's First Film* [1917]) and Victor Sjöström (*Terje Vigen* (1917) and the *Outlaw and his Wife* (1918)) being the most prominent.³⁰ The Danish Nordisk Film Company (NFC), founded in 1906 by Ole Olsen, managed to acquire and control cinema circuits and distribution networks in Switzerland, Germany and Austria, whilst investing in feature films.³¹ The climax of the Scandinavian cinematic film industry, according to David Robinson, was reached during and immediately after the war.³² Meanwhile, the French Pathé company sold its USA interests to the American firm, Radio-Keith-Orpheum (RKO).³³ One of the most renowned British producers, Cecil Hepworth, went bankrupt and by 1925 Britain was producing only a handful of films annually. To put this in perspective, half of the films shown on American soil in the first decade of the 20th century were produced in Europe, whilst in the 1910s the number declined to 20%.³⁴

“Hollywood”³⁵ subsequently assumed control of global markets – a dominance which continues to this day. The introduction of motion pictures with a synchronized soundtrack in

²⁹ Gerben Bakker, “The Economic History of the International Film Industry”, EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples, February 10, 2008, Accessed: September 8, 2016: <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-the-international-film-industry/>.

³⁰ David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 80-82.

³¹ Notable works include *Atlantis* (1913) and *The Sky Ship* (1916). Gerben Bakker, “The Economic History of the International Film Industry”, EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples, February 10, 2008, Accessed: September 8, 2016: <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-the-international-film-industry/>.

³² In Germany, for example, government forced NFC to sell its assets to the German company, Universum Film AG. David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 80.

³³ Gerben Bakker, “The Economic History of the International Film Industry”, EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples, February 10, 2008, Accessed: September 8, 2016: <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-the-international-film-industry/>.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ A neighbourhood in the central region of Los Angeles, California. Its name had become a metonym for the motion picture industry of the United States. Many cinematic film firms relocated to Hollywood to escape the patent regulations enforced by Edison's MPPC.

1927 (or “talkies”), further increased the cinematic film industry’s position as a mass entertainment industry.³⁶ Sound films were a novelty that enjoyed instant success and, as such, prominent industrial companies such as General Electric and Western Electric, as well as banks, including Goldman Sachs (GS Bank USA), Chase National Bank, Rockefeller and the Bank of America, were fascinated by the invention and enthusiastic to invest in productions that incorporated sound in this way.³⁷

A major difference between the silent and sound film was that one which incorporates synchronized dialogue tends to be more culturally specific. As a result the European cinematic film industry experienced increased revenues, since many films were produced in a language native to a certain country. However, “culture-specification”, as Bakker describes this, consequently decreased the foreign income received by European companies.³⁸ Though the number of American films released in Europe declined, Hollywood still maintained dominance of the world industry as most of the world’s patent rights in sound equipment belonged to American studios.³⁹ In the Netherlands, for example, 52% of the motion pictures screened in the country from 1934 to 1936 were produced in the USA, whilst local productions only amounted to 2%.⁴⁰ Some European governments, such as Britain with the Cinematograph Films Act of 1927, endeavoured to protect their industries by limiting the influx of American productions.⁴¹ To ensure that revenue exceeded expenditure, the cinematic industry – particularly the American industry which had the financial means – invested heavily in directors, actors, screenwriters and the rights to adapt novels/plays into film screenplays.⁴²

³⁶ *The Jazz Singer* (1927), an American musical, was the first feature film to incorporate synchronised dialogue sequences. The film was distributed by Warner Brothers. David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 163.

³⁷ Eric Rhode, *A History of the Cinema from its Origins to 1970*, (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1976), p. 263.

³⁸ Gerben Bakker, “The Economic History of the International Film Industry”, EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples, February 10, 2008, Accessed: September 8, 2016: <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-the-international-film-industry/>.

³⁹ In Britain, for example, the share of American films released between 1927 and 1930 dropped from 80% to 70%. Gerben Bakker, “The Economic History of the International Film Industry”, EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples, February 10, 2008, Accessed: September 8, 2016: <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-the-international-film-industry/>. David Robinson, *World Cinema: A Short History*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 170.

⁴⁰ John Sedgwick, Clara Pafort-Overduin & Jaap Boter, “Explanations for the Restrained Development of the Dutch Cinema Market in the 1930s”, *The International Journal of Business History* 13 (2012), p. 644.

⁴¹ D.L. Le Mahieu, “Reviewed Work: Cinema and State: The Film Industry and the Government, 1927-84 by Margaret Dickinson, Sarah Street”, *The American Historical Review* 91 (1986), p. 673.

⁴² One of the most famous examples: the actor Jack Nicholson agreed to star in *Batman* (1989), distributed by Warner Brothers, for \$10 million. He played a supporting role as the Joker. His contract also stated that a percentage of the box office takings, merchandise and sequels (even though he did not appear in them) must be paid to the actor.

These investments acted as a marketing strategy to attract the consumer to a production (a phenomenon that continues to this day), optimizing “advertising effectiveness by rapidly amassing high levels of brand-awareness.”⁴³ The cinematic film industry – with Hollywood at its core – continued to expand as a mass entertainment industry. However, the industry would be subject to serious disruption after the full-scale introduction of television services (a topic discussed in Chapter Four).

Afrikaner Economic Advancement⁴⁴

Hermann Giliomee argues that the economic advancement of the Afrikaner has to be attributed to a combination of ethnic mobilisation, Afrikaner political control (particularly after 1948) and the expeditious economic development of South Africa during the course of the twentieth century.⁴⁵ During the 1890s, when the advent of South Africa’s cinematic industry is generally thought to have commenced, most Afrikaners, particularly within the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free-State, were engaged in what Giliomee describes as subsistence agricultural activity.⁴⁶ The discovery of diamonds in Kimberley in 1866 and gold at the Witwatersrand in 1886 contributed towards transforming South Africa’s economy from an agricultural to a mining and, consequently, an industrialised society.⁴⁷ However, the financial management of South Africa’s mining industry was largely controlled and exploited by enterprising Britons, Eastern European Jews, and (to a lesser extent) Americans and Germans, whilst trade was managed by “thousands” of English citizens who had immigrated to South Africa.⁴⁸ These foreigners, with knowledge gained from their experiences in the business sector, coupled with their business relations with foreign monetary powers, guaranteed them a lion’s share of South Africa’s newly discovered mineral wealth. The foreign businessmen were commonly referred

⁴³ Gerben Bakker, “The Economic History of the International Film Industry”, EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples, February 10, 2008, Accessed: September 8, 2016: <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-the-international-film-industry/>.

⁴⁴ This thesis focuses on the Afrikaans cinematic film industry, hence only the most significant events of Afrikaner economic advancement from 1896-1956 will be discussed. The focus of this section falls on the socio-economic history of the Afrikaner.

⁴⁵ Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 175.

⁴⁶ Independent Boer republics established in 1852 and 1854, respectively. Hermann Giliomee. “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”, In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 145.

⁴⁷ J.L. Sadie, *The Fall and Rise of the Afrikaner in the South African Economy*, (Annale 2002/1, University of Stellenbosch, 2002), p. 8.

⁴⁸ Hermann Giliomee, “Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner Case, 1915-1970”, *South African Journal for Economics* 76 (2008), 768. J.A. Lombard, „Die Ekonomiese Ontwikkeling van die Afrikaner“. In P. V. De Pienaar (ed.), *Kultuurgeskiedenis van die Afrikaner*, (Kaapstad: Nasionale Boekhandel, 1968), p. 127.

to as *Uitlanders* (outsiders/foreigners) by Afrikaners in the Transvaal Republic.⁴⁹ Afrikaners failed to engage in economic activity as they were – as J.L. Sadie, author of *Die Ekonomiese Faktor in die Afrikaanse Gemeenskap*, argues – “entirely unprepared for the effective exploitation of the land’s newly discovered gold and diamonds”, even in the Transvaal, where Afrikaners had assumed complete political control.⁵⁰ A number of scholars⁵¹ have all endeavoured to establish the reasons for this lack of preparedness among Afrikaners and/or their reluctance to engage with the modern economic activity, citing factors such as the imposed religious, cultural and traditional constraints advanced by Afrikaner Calvinism and the Afrikaners’ lack of economic experience outside the agricultural framework, which resulted in the Afrikaner lacking the inducement to fully utilize the new economic environment to their advantage.

The modernisation of South Africa’s economy inaugurated a period of technological and social advancement as South Africa’s railway networks were improved,⁵² which connected the industrialised towns (such as Johannesburg and Kimberley for example) with ports; harbour facilities were enhanced; foreign trade was developed and coastlines benefitted from import tariffs.⁵³ However, as different regions were brought closer together, tensions increased, particularly between Afrikaners, foreigners and the British Empire. The South African War,⁵⁴ fought between the British Empire and the Boer Republics (and rebels in Natal and the Cape Colony) consequently commenced in 1899 and would prove to be the bloodiest war fought on South African soil.⁵⁵ The years that followed were decisive for the shaping of Afrikaner national consciousness and economic enterprise in the twentieth century, largely as a reaction against British imperial domination. The British Empire’s initial objective to incorporate the Boer republics into a federation of states, the Jameson Raid (1895-1896) and the South African

⁴⁹ By 1900 Johannesburg (a city at the head of the gold-mining industry) had 100 000 inhabitants, mostly consisting of foreigners, as well as 50 000 blacks. Johannesburg had been founded in 1886. Randall G. Stokes, “Afrikaner Calvinism and Economic Action: The Weberian Thesis in South Africa”, *American Journal of Sociology* 81 (1975), p. 69.

⁵⁰ J.L. Sadie, “Die Ekonomiese Faktor in die Afrikaner-gemeenskap”. In H.W. van der Merwe (ed.), *Identiteit en Verandering*, (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1974), p. 87.

⁵¹ Including academics such as Randall G. Stokes, J.L. Sadie, F.A. van Jaarsveld, Charles van Onselen and J.A. Lombard.

⁵² This point will be expanded upon later.

⁵³ J.A. Wiid, “Die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaner”. In P. V. De Pienaar (ed.), *Kultuurgeskiedenis van die Afrikaner*, (Kaapstad: Nasionale Boekhandel, 1968), p. 28.

⁵⁴ Also known as the Anglo-Boer War or the Second Boer War.

⁵⁵ The British Empire suffered an estimated 22 000 military casualties and the Boers (Afrikaners) 6 000, whilst 28 000 Boer women and children and 20 000 blacks perished in the British concentration camps. Fransjohan Pretorius, “The white concentration camps of the Anglo-Boer War: A debate without end”, *Historia* 55 (2010), p. 44.

War (1899-1902) are topics that have been documented at great length by numerous military, political and social historians: for example, Jean van der Poel's *The Jameson Raid* (1951), Bill Nasson's *The South African War 1899-1902* (1999), Iain R Smith's *The Origins of the South African War 1899-1902* (1996), Fransjohan Pretorius's *The Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902* (1985), Thomas Pakenham's *The Boer War* (1992) and Peter Warwick's *Black People and the South African War, 1899-1902* (1983), to name but a few. As such, the full extent of this engagement will not be covered in detail. This period was a demonstration of British commitment to bring about political, socio-economic, capitalist-oriented reform by means of military might. Yet this period and its symbols – such as the British concentration camps, the scorched-earth policy, for instance – were utilized as a unifying force amongst the Afrikaner population. The war ended after the Treaty of Vereeniging (Treaty) was signed in 1902.⁵⁶ The existence of the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free-State as independent republics was ended by the Treaty and they were annexed by the British.

After the signing of the Treaty, Afrikaners remained the majority in the Orange Free State and Transvaal, but the British colonial authority determined political and economic policy despite the Afrikaners' supremacy in numbers.⁵⁷ The outcome of the South African War was particularly damaging for the traditional economic lifestyle of the Afrikaners in the former Boer republics, considering that most relied on agricultural activity as a means of income. Apart from the costs of human lives and horses, the British military strategy such as the brutal yet effective scorched-earth policy resulted in the destruction of the Afrikaner's agricultural lands (30 000 farmhouses were burned down) and livestock.⁵⁸ For example, three-quarters of livestock in the Transvaal Republic were destroyed and two-thirds in the Orange Free State.⁵⁹ The Afrikaner farming community was left with 40% or less of their pre-war assets.⁶⁰ As a result, many Afrikaners were forced to migrating to the industrialised centres of South Africa

⁵⁶ J.L. Sadie, *The Fall and Rise of the Afrikaner in the South African Economy*, (Annale 2002/1, University of Stellenbosch, 2002), 8. Newelle Stultz, *Afrikaner Politics in South Africa, 1934-1948*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), p. 1.

⁵⁷ A census taken in 1904 indicated that Afrikaners represented 58% of the total white population of SA and that 19% of Afrikaners lived in towns and cities. Hermann Giliomee, "Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner Case, 1915-1970", *South African Journal for Economics* 76 (2008), p. 768.

⁵⁸ J.L. Sadie, "Die Ekonomiese Faktor in die Afrikaner-gemeenskap". In H.W. van der Merwe (ed.), *Identiteit en Verandering*, (Kaapstad: Tafelberg, 1974), p. 87.

⁵⁹ Hermann Giliomee, "Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner Case, 1915-1970", *South African Journal for Economics* 76 (2008), p. 768.

⁶⁰ J.L. Sadie, "Die Ekonomiese Faktor in die Afrikaner-gemeenskap". In H.W. van der Merwe (ed.), *Identiteit en Verandering*. (Kaapstad: Tafelberg, 1974), p. 87.

and became increasingly urbanised.⁶¹ However, a lack of education, the inability to effectively communicate in the language of commerce and industry (English), and a lack of knowledge and experience of the modern business sector forced Afrikaners into unskilled forms of labour. Afrikaner migration brought about unexpected social and racial dynamics – white workers competed against black labour for low-paying occupations. Conditions favoured the black worker as a result of a longer engagement with urban industrial activity and a willingness to work for a lower wage.⁶² According to Grietjie Verhoef, post-war reconstruction policies adopted by the British authorities between 1902 and 1910 aimed at encouraging macro-economic development in the colonies in service of the British Empire (particularly the goldmines), without focusing on a specific group of the South African population.⁶³ During this period Afrikaners were unable to exercise substantial influence on socio-economic and political management; as Lord Alfred Milner stated: “they [Afrikaners] must remain an important element, though they will no longer be the dominant element... For a great Johannesburg... means a British Transvaal”.⁶⁴ However, as Hermann Giliomee has indicated, though Afrikaners were experiencing “critical times” economically,⁶⁵ some Afrikaners still managed to generate a substantial income by means of commercial farming. Despite their displacement, four-fifths of South African agriculture was still controlled by Afrikaners.⁶⁶ Furthermore, Afrikaners located in the Cape Colony were less afflicted by the upheavals experienced by their compatriots in the former Boer republics and as such were generally more affluent. However, notwithstanding a difference in their respective levels of income, Cape Afrikaners sympathised with the “northern” Afrikaners who suffered economically.⁶⁷ The detestation of British capitalism (as an aspect of their anti-imperialist sentiments), the preservation of racial privileges and the commitment to develop Dutch (later Afrikaans) into a language that enjoyed similar status as English united Afrikaners in the “North” and in the

⁶¹ Though formally identified as South Africa after 1910, the term “South Africa” is used to include the colonies within the geographical area.

⁶² Compared to an Afrikaner.

⁶³ Grietjie Verhoef, “Die stigting van instellings as werktuie in die ekonomiese opbouproses van die Afrikaner sedert die Anglo-Boereoorlog”, Lecture, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog-gedenklesing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, University of Johannesburg, Pretoria, 18 September 2003, p. 212.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 146.

⁶⁶ In 1910 farming contributed 22,9% of South Africa’s national income. Hermann, Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 146.

⁶⁷ “Northern” is used to identify Afrikaners living in the former Boer republics.

Cape – ultimately contributing to the development of an ethnic and social consciousness, in Afrikaner Nationalism.

On 31 May 1910 the Union of South Africa was established as a dominion of the British Empire, which initiated the first steps to the modern economic advancement of the Afrikaner. During the first decades of the Union of South Africa (under the rule of the South African Party [1911-1924]),⁶⁸ economic growth occurred at a sluggish pace considering, for example, that gross national income increased by an average of 0,2% annually between 1912 and 1922.⁶⁹ Afrikaners were yet again divided after the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, which ultimately led to the Rebellion of 1914-15.⁷⁰ In the aftermath of the Rebellion numerous civil claims were lodged against the rebels as result of the losses suffered by loyalists as a consequence of the armed insurrection. Since many of the Afrikaner rebels were mired in poverty, their financial position made it impossible to pay these claims at their own expense. The *Helpmekaarbeweging* (Mutual Aid Movement) was consequently established to accumulate funds and as such settle the rebels' debt.⁷¹ The movement, according to Anton Ehlers,⁷² had a political, social and – most significant for this discussion – economic influence on Afrikaner society: the political popularity of the National Party increased amongst Afrikaners in opposition to the ruling party (SAP),⁷³ the movement granted Afrikaners the opportunity to engage in a social activity linked to their cultural heritage, thus contributing to a sense of national consciousness, and the movement encouraged the Afrikaner community (through vital Afrikaner businessmen) to eliminate the *volk's* socio-economic difficulties.⁷⁴ The funds generated within the first months exceeded expectations and prominent Afrikaner entrepreneurs – particularly in the Western Cape, who received financial backing from wealthy farmers – realised that Afrikaner enterprises could be established to empower the Afrikaner in

⁶⁸ Abbreviation: SAP

⁶⁹ Grietjie Verhoef, "Die stigting van instellings as werktuie in die ekonomiese opbouproses van die Afrikaner sedert die Anglo-Boereoorlog", Lecture, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog-gedenklesing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, University of Johannesburg, Pretoria, 18 September 2003, p. 213.

⁷⁰ The Rebellion 1914-15 was an armed protest by Afrikaner nationalists against the South African government, sourced in the state's decision to engage South Africa into the First World War as a British Ally.

Anton Ehlers, "The Helpmekaar: Rescuing the "volk" through reading, writing and arithmetic, c. 1916–c 1965", *Historia* 60 (2015), p. 89.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² Author of *Die Helpmekaarbeweging in Suid-Afrika: Die Storm-en-Drangjare, 1915-1920*.

⁷³ South African Party.

⁷⁴ Anton Ehlers, *Die Helpmekaarbeweging in Suid-Afrika* (Ongepubliseerde MA, University of Stellenbosch, 1986), p. ii.

terms of business employment and training.⁷⁵ On 18 December 1914⁷⁶ prominent Cape Afrikaners gathered in Stellenbosch to deliberate on the prospects of establishing a nationalist newspaper in order, amongst other things, to oppose the decision of the government (SAP) to enter into the First World War as a British ally.⁷⁷ Afrikaner philanthropists Jannie Marais and Christiaan Marais⁷⁸ acquired over a quarter of 20 000 (£1) shares in the newspaper's holding company.⁷⁹ *Nasionale Pers*, founded in 1915, appointed (future Prime Minister) D.F. Malan as editor of its daily newspaper, *De* (later *Die*)⁸⁰ *Burger*,⁸¹ which published its first issue on 26 July 1915.⁸² In *De Burger's* first editorial Malan emphasised that the newspaper was founded to address the socio-economic and political difficulties faced by the Afrikaner volk.⁸³ The newspaper continuously appealed to Afrikaner solidarity, whilst encouraging Afrikaners to donate to the *Helpmekearbeweging*.⁸⁴ The movement was highly successful as it raised over £330 000 (surplus exceeded £92 000) with the assistance of Afrikaner community leaders, teachers, students and church leaders. The *Helpmekearbeweging* accumulated its targeted amount before the deadline of 10 November 1917, which further manifested a sense of accomplishment and solidarity amongst Afrikaners.⁸⁵ The movement, with support provided

⁷⁵ Hermann Giliomee, "The Afrikaner Economic Advance". In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 147.

⁷⁶ The National Party was founded in the same year.

⁷⁷ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide: Geboorte en Groei van die Nasionale Pers, 1915-1948*, (Kaapstad: Nasionale Boekhandel Bpk, 1990), 80. Hermann Giliomee, "Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner Case, 1915-1970", *South African Journal for Economics* 76 (2008), p. 766.

⁷⁸ The Marais brothers accumulated their fortunes in Kimberley after acquiring shares in the Kimberley Central Mining Company and later De Beers Consolidated Mines when the former merged with De Beers. Afrikaans advocate, Jannie Marais' s ventures, for example, were numerous and extended beyond mining to include the Lion Distillery in Vlotenburg, the Malmesbury Voogdy and Assuransiematskappy, as well as acting as a director of the Stellenbosch District Bank (to name only a few). Jannie Marais also played a substantial role in the development of Stellenbosch University (previously known as Victoria College) as he bequeathed £100 000 to the institution, thus giving it the status of an independent university – one which granted Dutch/Afrikaans equal status to English. Pieter Kapp, *Nalatenskap sonder Einde: Die Verhaal van Jannie Marais en die Marais-broers*, (Kaapstad: Tip Africa Publishing, 2015), p. 62, p. 83, p. 142.

⁷⁹ C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide: Geboorte en Groei van die Nasionale Pers, 1915-1948*, (Kaapstad: Nasionale Boekhandel Bpk, 1990), p. 99.

⁸⁰ *Die Burger* would initially be published in Dutch. However, the first Afrikaans issue was published in 1916. In 1921 the name change from *De Burger* to *Die Burger*.

⁸¹ The Dutch/Afrikaans word for "citizen".

⁸² C.F.J. Muller, *Sonop in die Suide: Geboorte en Groei van die Nasionale Pers, 1915-1948*, (Kaapstad: Nasionale Boekhandel Bpk, 1990), p. 75.

⁸³ Grietjie Verhoef, "Die stigting van instellings as werktuie in die ekonomiese opbouproses van die Afrikaner sedert die Anglo-Boereoorlog", Lecture, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog-gedenklesing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, University of Johannesburg, Pretoria, 18 September 2003, p. 213.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Anton Ehlers, *Die Helpmekearbeweging in Suid-Afrika*, (Ongepubliseerde MA, University of Stellenbosch, 1986), p. 146.

Hermann Giliomee, "Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner Case, 1915-1970", *South African Journal for Economics* 76 (2008), p. 769.

by the *Nasionale Pers*, revealed the potential of accumulating considerable Afrikaner savings. Within a space of a decade major Afrikaner companies were founded, including the *Koöperatiewe Wijnbouwers Vereeniging* (KWV)⁸⁶ the *Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Trust- en Assuransiematskappy* (Santam) and (most significant for the future Afrikaans cinematic industry)⁸⁷ the *Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Lewensassuransiematskappy* (Sanlam), attracting Afrikaner savings through proclaiming themselves as Afrikaner institutions in the service of the ambition of creating economic self-reliance for the *volk*.⁸⁸

Encouraged by the *Helpmekaarbeweging*, Cape Afrikaner businessmen endeavoured to establish a true Afrikaner enterprise in the form of a trust and insurance company. The founding members of Santam and Sanlam⁸⁹ – apart from the Scotsman A. MacDowell – were Afrikaners, namely W.A. Hofmeyr, C.G. Fichardt, C.R. Louw, P.A. Malan, A.F.J. Benning and F.H. Dormehl. The members were involved in Afrikaner society in one way or another, but more importantly they had the necessary business experience and were capitalists.⁹⁰ Significantly, the members were Afrikaner nationalists, with W.A. (Willie) Hofmeyr, for example, playing an integral part in convincing D.F. Malan to enter the realm of South African politics.⁹¹ Santam, a short-term insurer, and Sanlam, a life assurer and subsidiary company of Santam, were established on 28 March 1918 and 8 June 1918 respectively. Sanlam, however, would later spearhead operations. Like most Cape Afrikaners, the Sanlam/Santam leadership engaged business with a sense of responsibility aimed at conducting business activities to educate the Afrikaner. Sanlam's objective was evident from the outset, as the company employed and trained young Afrikaners and in this way social capital was utilised to mobilise Afrikaners in an extended business network. Grietjie Verhoef defines social capital as follows:

“The core of social capital theory is that social networks have value. Social capital encompasses the connections among individuals, social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from these relations. These relations constitute resources that can be

⁸⁶ Established as a winemaking co-operative by winemakers in the Western Cape in 1918.

⁸⁷ Sanlam completely revolutionised the South African distribution and exhibition industry. This topic will be discussed in the following chapter.

⁸⁸ Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 147.

⁸⁹ Though institutions such as KWV played a significant role, Sanlam and Santam are discussed in more detail since they played a paramount role in the Afrikaans cinematic industry.

⁹⁰ Grietjie Verhoef, “Nationalism, social capital and economic empowerment: SANLAM and the economic upliftment of the Afrikaner people, 1918-1960”, *Business History* 50 (2008), p. 700.

⁹¹ Lindie Korf, *D.F. Malan: a political biography*, (Unpublished PhD, University of Stellenbosch, 2010), p. 89.

utilised to obtain certain ends, such as neighbourliness and social support, engagement in business enterprise or enhanced productivity.”⁹²

Chairman W.A. Hofmeyr declared the establishment of Sanlam a ‘*Geloofsdaad*’.⁹³ Though growth was initially slow, Santam and Sanlam demonstrated that Afrikaner savings could be utilised to increase the Afrikaners’ involvement in South Africa’s economy. It must be stated, however, that these institutions were not the result of government intervention by the SAP, as the state wished to increase white employment and wages, but not at the expense of capitalist expansion as indicated by the Rand Revolt of 1922.⁹⁴ The government’s protection of South African industry was deemed to display a “colonial attitude” by the founders of Santam/Sanlam.⁹⁵ As such, the latter’s board members thought it best to rely on establishing a local industry that could compete with the foreign product.⁹⁶ The Afrikaans trade magazine *Volkshandel*⁹⁷ described Sanlam, for example, as “more than just another insurance company... It is a company established by Afrikaners for Afrikaners, and was indeed one of the leading companies that inaugurated the new era of the Afrikaner economic upsurge after 1917-1918.”⁹⁸ As Verhoef correctly indicated, this period was significant for Afrikaner economic advancement; even though more attention was focused on the question of Afrikaner poverty, prominent Afrikaner business and agricultural figures emerged who had the influence and financial means to develop an economic solution for what would be known as the “poor white” problem.⁹⁹

⁹² Grietjie Verhoef, “Nationalism, social capital and economic empowerment: SANLAM and the economic upliftment of the Afrikaner people, 1918-1960”, *Business History* 50 (2008), p. 696.

⁹³ “An act of faith”, *Ibid.*, p. 704.

⁹⁴ The Rand Rebellion (or Rand Revolt, or Second Rand Revolt) was an armed uprising of white miners in the Witwatersrand region of South Africa in March 1922. Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 149.

⁹⁵ Grietjie Verhoef, “Die stigting van instellings as werktuie in die ekonomiese opbouproses van die Afrikaner sedert die Anglo-Boereoorlog”, Lecture, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog-gedenklesing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, University of Johannesburg, Pretoria, 18 September 2003, p. 215.

⁹⁶ As will be indicated in the next chapter, Sanlam would localise the film distribution and exhibition industry without financial assistance from the government.

⁹⁷ *Volkshandel* (Pty) Ltd’s Afrikaans trade magazine *Volkshandel* provided Afrikaners with information on economic issues to consolidate the realisation of Afrikaner economic empowerment and independence. The first issue was published in 1940 during the first meeting held by the Economic Institute (to be discussed shortly) the previous year.

Volkshandel, March 1940, “Van die Redaksie”, p. 1.

⁹⁸ *Volkshandel*, April 1947, “Gesiedenis van Sanlam”, p. 5.

⁹⁹ Grietjie Verhoef, “Die stigting van instellings as werktuie in die ekonomiese opbouproses van die Afrikaner sedert die Anglo-Boereoorlog”, Lecture, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog-gedenklesing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, University of Johannesburg, Pretoria, 18 September 2003, p. 216.

Meanwhile, in 1918 a group of Afrikaner nationalists, under the authority of H.J. Kloppe, established an organisation that would play an important part in shaping the Afrikaner economic advance during the course of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁰ The organisation, acting as a secret institution from 1921, identified itself as the *Afrikaner Broederbond* (or Broederbond).¹⁰¹ The main objective of the Broederbond was to assert Afrikaner cultural and political dominance in South Africa. The society was convinced that by achieving this level of dominance, its economic aims could be fulfilled. These aims included: nationally controlled industrialisation that would end foreign exploitation of South African resources; the Afrikanerization of education that would support Afrikaner economic self-development; alleviating the Afrikaner's socio-economic position by the rehabilitation of rural areas; and the co-ordination of modern commerce and nationalisation of finance.¹⁰² The Broederbond realised that its national influence was limited as a secret society and it subsequently established organisations such as the *Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings* (FAK)¹⁰³ in 1929 to act as a public extension. By 1937 almost 300 student associations, cultural bodies, church councils, scientific and educational organisations aligned themselves with the Broederbond.¹⁰⁴ By 1960 this network expanded to 2 000 organisations affiliated with the society.¹⁰⁵

The establishment of business and cultural organisations aimed at uplifting the Afrikaner, continued capitalist expansion and rural poverty led to a dramatic increase in Afrikaner urbanisation from the creation of the Union to the mid-1930s. For example, in 1917 Afrikaners contributed only 13% to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (a rather low figure,

¹⁰⁰ Dan O'Meara, "The Afrikaner Broederbond 1927-1948: Class Vanguard of Afrikaner Nationalism", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 2 (1977), p. 156.

¹⁰¹ The influence of the Broederbond, particularly during the second half of the twentieth century, is a topic hotly debated by scholars. But this thesis will not discuss its degree and nature of its influence in great detail. The origins of the Broederbond, initially known as *Jong Suid-Afrika*, can be traced back to a speech made by the editor of *De Burger*, D.F. Malan (future Prime Minister of South Africa) at the end of the First World War. The speech invoked Afrikaner nationalism and consisted of anti-British sentiments because of the events of the South African War. This led to a brawl between Afrikaner nationalists and British loyalists after the speech had been delivered. The young Afrikaners subsequently created the society. Ivor Wilkins & Hans Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond*, (Jeppestown: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2012), p. 44. Dan O'Meara, "The Afrikaner Broederbond 1927-1948: Class Vanguard of Afrikaner Nationalism", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 2 (1977), p. 158.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 165-166.

¹⁰³ A cultural organisation to promote the language and culture of Afrikaners.

¹⁰⁴ Dan O'Meara, "The Afrikaner Broederbond 1927-1948: Class Vanguard of Afrikaner Nationalism", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 2 (1977), p. 169.

¹⁰⁵ Rasjid Begg, *The Afrikaners, Capitalism and Max Weber's Ghost*. (Kurdistan: Hewlêr Press, 2013), p. 177.

considering that Afrikaners constituted nearly 60% of the total white population).¹⁰⁶ In 1900 10% of the Afrikaner population were urbanised.¹⁰⁷ By 1926 the figure grew to 41%, but as urbanisation increased so did poverty.¹⁰⁸ The 1930s, however, would prove to be an even more challenging decade for the South African economy and the Afrikaner, particularly when the effects of the Great Depression sparked by the 1929 stock market crash came to be felt.¹⁰⁹ The economic damage suffered by South Africa increased as the government refused to shift from the gold standard to the fiat monetary system.¹¹⁰ Hermann Giliomee writes:

“Poverty was of course widespread in the Western world during the Depression, but in South Africa it was confined to one section of the white population, the Afrikaners... It was this context that made Afrikaner poverty such an emotional issue, allowing ethnic mobilisers to hold British Imperialism responsible... rather than accepting it as part of the generally painful process of industrialisation and the breakdown of the Western economic order.”¹¹¹

In 1927 the *Nederduitse-Gereformeerde Kerk* (N.G.K.)¹¹² commissioned an official investigation, known as the Carnegie Commission of Inquiry, to scientifically investigate the scale and character of South Africa’s “poor white” problem.¹¹³ In 1932 the Carnegie Commission’s research indicated that 300 000 (or 25%) members of the Afrikaner population could be classified as a “poor white”.¹¹⁴ This meant that the number of extremely impoverished whites increased by approximately 100 000 between 1920 and 1933. The condition of Afrikaners trapped in poverty was a source of great concern amongst nationalists – including

¹⁰⁶ Hermann Giliomee, “Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner Case, 1915-1970”, *South African Journal for Economics* 76 (2008), p. 768.

¹⁰⁷ Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 150.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ The Depression had a destructive effect on the prices of primary goods and as such on the agricultural sector.

¹¹⁰ When the Great Depression struck, people withdrew their deposits, consequently depleting the gold supply. Governments, including in South Africa, had to keep interest rates high. Consequently, the depression made borrowing too expensive for individuals and companies. In 1933 the USA abolished the gold standard to feed the economy and lower interest rates. In short, the fiat monetary system allowed people to have money and, more importantly, buying power – albeit by means of credit.

¹¹¹ Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 150-151.

¹¹² Dutch Reformed Church (DRC).

¹¹³ The American Carnegie Corporation donated £4 000 for the research. Grietjie Verhoef, “Die stigting van instellings as werktuie in die ekonomiese opbouproses van die Afrikaner sedert die Anglo-Boereoorlog”, Lecture, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog-gedenklesing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, University of Johannesburg, Pretoria, 18 September 2003, p. 213.

¹¹⁴ “Poor whites” refer to white South Africans who were caught in a subsistence lifestyle, often dependent on welfare organisations. J.L. Sadie, *Die Ekonomiese Faktor in die Afrikaner-gemeenskap*, In H.W. van der Merwe (ed.), *Identiteit en Verandering*, (Kaapstad: Tafelberg, 1974), p. 88.

the Pact government (elected in 1924).¹¹⁵ Apart from this plight of Afrikaners acting as a barrier to Afrikaner economic mobilisation, Prime Minister J.B.M Hertzog, leader of the National Party, regarded the “poor white” issue as a condition that could encourage racial mixing as both Afrikaners and Blacks lived in and shared squalid living conditions.¹¹⁶ As such, Hertzog implemented a labour policy that dramatically increased the number of unskilled and/or semi-skilled Afrikaners employed in South Africa’s public sector. In 1924 9,5% of unskilled white workers were unemployed, which increased to approximately 40% in 1933.¹¹⁷ During the 1920s legislation was introduced in an attempt to protect the interests of white workers, including the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924, the amended Customs Tariffs Act of 1925, the Wage Act of 1925 and the Mines and Works Act of 1926.¹¹⁸ However, as the Commission illustrated, despite government intervention the number of “poor whites” increased steadily.

The Great Depression of the early 1930s, coupled with the unrest caused by the predicament around the gold standard, encouraged the political merger of Hertzog’s National Party and Jan Smuts’s South African Party on 5 December 1934, which created the United South African National Party (UP).¹¹⁹ Subsequently, the government introduced more strategies to benefit the Afrikaner economically; for example, between 1928 and 1939 expenditure on agriculture increased by 400%.¹²⁰ A year before the creation of the UP, the Treasurer of the Broederbond, along with 60 other members, founded the co-operative bank (commercial bank in 1942), *Volkskas*, with the aim of utilising savings and granting loans to business owners, who would

¹¹⁵ The Pact Government was formed in 1924 and ruled from 1924 (June 17) to 1933, when it was succeeded by the United South African National Party (later called the United Party). The two main opposition parties of the time, J.B.M. Hertzog’s National Party and Creswell’s Labour Party, had formed a pact to defeat the SAP. The coalition represented two main groups: the National Party represented anti-imperialists and Afrikaners who opposed Smuts’s industrialisation policies, while the Labour Party drew strong support from working-class whites – particularly miners who were disaffected by the 1922 Rand revolt. It was during this period that Afrikaans became an official language in South Africa (1925).

¹¹⁶ Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 151.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Grietjie Verhoef, “Die stigting van instellings as werktuie in die ekonomiese opbouproses van die Afrikaner sedert die Anglo-Boereoorlog”, Lecture, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog-gedenklesing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, University of Johannesburg, Pretoria, 18 September 2003, p. 214.

¹¹⁹ This led to D.F. Malan, along with other former NP members, forming the Purified National Party (PNP) in the same year.

¹²⁰ An industry strongly affected by the Great Depression and the drought of 1933. Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 152.

in turn employ Afrikaners.¹²¹ Although the growth of *Volkskas*, was initially slow, it represented a substantial milestone, considering that it was the first significant Afrikaner business enterprise from the “North” in an industry (banking) that was totally dominated by foreigners.¹²² However, the income gap between Afrikaners and English South Africans, particularly within secondary industries (small businessmen and workers), had yet to be resolved. Furthermore, Afrikaners (occupying the lowest-level jobs available for whites) were handicapped as “English-dominated unions” regulated training facilities.¹²³ In 1936 Afrikaners earned an average annual income of £86 p/capita (compared to £146 of other whites) and in 1939 298 000 whites were estimated to earn a monthly income of £12 or less – thus trapped in “terrible poverty”.¹²⁴

In 1939, consequent upon instruction of the FAK (Broederbond), the *Eerste Ekonomiese Volkskongres* (Congress) was held in Bloemfontein.¹²⁵ The Congress, according to Prof. W. Pretorius and Willem Keizer, was a “landmark in the history of the Afrikaner people, as a starting point of the Afrikaner’s awakening in the economic field.”¹²⁶ Referring to the Congress as the “starting point” is rather debatable, considering the influence of the *Helpmekearbeweging* and that both the government and the Afrikaner business elite had already deployed strategies for Afrikaner economic empowerment. However, the Congress was a vital step in expediting the efficiency of the process. According to its Patron, Ds J.D. Kestell, the objective of the Congress was to act as a spur for Afrikaner economic self-development (“’n Volk red homself”)¹²⁷ and promoting the view that Afrikaners must form part of all sectors

¹²¹ Hermann Giliomee, “Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner Case, 1915-1970”, *South African Journal for Economics* 76 (2008), p. 770.

¹²² Grietjie Verhoef, “Die stigting van instellings as werktuie in die ekonomiese opbouproses van die Afrikaner sedert die Anglo-Boereoorlog”, Lecture, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog-gedenklesing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, University of Johannesburg, Pretoria, 18 September 2003, p. 216.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 154.

¹²⁵ The Congress was held on 3, 4 and 5 October 1939 and was attended by 757 cultural, church and economic representatives. J.D. Kestell was appointed Patron, whilst Ds Wm. Nicol acted as Chairman. Willem Keizer, *Die Ekonomiese Opkoms van die Afrikaner vanaf die Eerste Ekonomiese Volkskongres van 1939 en ’n Ontleding van sy Huidige Posisie in die Landseksonomie*, (Ongepubliseerde MA, University of Stellenbosch, 1966), p. 20.

¹²⁶ Willem Keizer, *Die Ekonomiese Opkoms van die Afrikaner vanaf die Eerste Ekonomiese Volkskongres van 1939 en ’n Ontleding van sy Huidige Posisie in die Landseksonomie*, (Ongepubliseerde MA, University of Stellenbosch, 1966), p. 22.

¹²⁷ Literal translation: A nation saves itself. The slogan means that Afrikaners had to depend on their own initiative and reject any element of welfare to become economically self-sufficient.

of the South African economy and not just a particular segment, such as agriculture.¹²⁸ The impact of the Congress was that two bodies of economic thought would be utilised to propel the Afrikaner economic movement, i.e. economic cooperatism and capitalism:

“The Volkskongres acted as a catalyst for Sanlam and the Broederbond to join hands in an attempt to bridge the acute North-South rivalry in the Afrikaner nationalist movement. The Transvaal-based Broederbond [and other cooperatists] offered the cultural entrepreneurs and Sanlam [and other capitalists] the business enterprise. Several Sanlam senior executives now accepted invitations to become members of the [Broeder] Bond.”¹²⁹

The Congress concluded that an institution had to be created that would embody the aims of the meeting and the *Ekonomiese Instituut* was created, which was managed by the FAK.¹³⁰ The institute would subsequently be required to establish the *Reddingsdaadbond* (RDB) to regulate the Afrikaner's economic advance, to mobilise Afrikaner savings, and to establish and/or promote industrial, technical and agricultural institutions.¹³¹ Notwithstanding the RDB's short existence (disbanded in 1956),¹³² the organisation had significant value as it promoted economic and business sciences at universities as well as an economic national consciousness amongst Afrikaners. During the 1940s and 1950s the RDB accumulated funds (through membership and donations) valued at £183 000, which were utilised for student loans and by Afrikaner companies, including *Federale Volksbeleggings Beperk* (FVB).¹³³ Sanlam, influenced by the objective of the Congress, aimed to establish a financial enterprise that would accumulate, as Tinie Louw put it, “the greatest possible profits for its shareholders”, but its paramount aim “will always be to enhance the Afrikaner position in trade and industry.”¹³⁴ FVB, controlled by Sanlam, was founded in 1940,¹³⁵ and encouraged Afrikaners (naturally

¹²⁸ Willem Keizer, *Die Ekonomiese Opkoms van die Afrikaner vanaf die Eerste Ekonomiese Volkskongres van 1939 en 'n Ontleding van sy Huidige Posisie in die Landseconomie*, (Ongepubliseerde MA, University of Stellenbosch, 1966), p. 23.

¹²⁹ Hermann Giliomee, “Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner Case, 1915-1970”, *South African Journal for Economics* 76 (2008), p. 772.

¹³⁰ Willem Keizer, *Die Ekonomiese Opkoms van die Afrikaner vanaf die Eerste Ekonomiese Volkskongres van 1939 en 'n Ontleding van sy Huidige Posisie in die Landseconomie*, (Ongepubliseerde MA, University of Stellenbosch, 1966), p. 27.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² Assets were acquired by the Ekonomiese Instituut.

¹³³ Grietjie Verhoef, “Die stigting van instellings as werktuie in die ekonomiese opbouproses van die Afrikaner sedert die Anglo-Boereoorlog”, Lecture, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog-gedenklesing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, University of Johannesburg, Pretoria, 18 September 2003, p. 217.

¹³⁴ Hermann Giliomee, “Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner Case, 1915-1970”, *South African Journal for Economics* 76 (2008), p. 772.

¹³⁵ E.P. du Plessis, *'n Volk Staar Op: Die Ekonomiese Volkskongres en Daarna*, (Kaapstad: Human en Rousseau Uitgewers, 1964), p. 144.

including Broederbond members) to acquire investment shares in, what Sanlam deemed to be, financially sound Afrikaner businesses. Approximately £2 million were invested in Afrikaner companies (largely FVB) by 1943.¹³⁶ In 1953 FVB founded *Federale Mynbou*, which acquired the gold and uranium mining company General Mining and Finance Corporation in 1963 (with assets valued at approximately R250 million).¹³⁷ Giliomee argues that the acquisition was an important economic step in strengthening business relations between English-speaking South Africans and Afrikaners. The *Bonus Beleggings Korporasie van Suid-Afrika* (Bonuskor), an investment company (founded in 1948) managed by the Sanlam group, was the first Afrikaans enterprise to be listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.¹³⁸

The year 1939 was significant in shaping the future of Afrikaner economic advancement as a result of the coming together of the Afrikaner cultural and business elites, but also because of England's decision to declare war on Germany i.e. the start of the Second World War (1939-1945). J.B.M. Hertzog, strongly opposed to Smut's intention to enter the war on behalf of the Allies, led a break-away faction in 1940 and reunited with D.F. Malan's Purified National Party (PNP).¹³⁹ On 6 November 1940 the *Herenigde* (Reunited) *Nasionale Party* (HNP, later the National Party) was established. During the 1940s the HNP promoted itself as an ethnic political organisation which endeavoured to endorse the socio-economic and political interests of the Afrikaner, thus appealing to the nationalistic and/or impoverished Afrikaner.¹⁴⁰ In 1948 the income gap between Afrikaners and other whites was still considerable, despite an average increase p/capita.¹⁴¹ On 26 May 1948 the NP won the general parliamentary election of 1948

¹³⁶ Hermann Giliomee, "Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner Case, 1915-1970", *South African Journal for Economics* 76 (2008), p. 773.

¹³⁷ Previously managed by Anglo-American Corporation. Hermann Giliomee, "The Afrikaner Economic Advance". In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 169.

¹³⁸ Hermann Giliomee, "Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner Case, 1915-1970", *South African Journal for Economics* 76 (2008), p. 773.

¹³⁹ As a British dominion, South Africa, under Smuts' authority, would fight for the Allies' cause. The PNP was founded in opposition to the merger between the National Party and the South African Party. A faction of the NP, led by D.F. Malan, opposed the merger and consequently defected to form the PNP. The Purified National Party also opposed South Africa entering the war.

¹⁴⁰ Particularly to farmers and working-class Afrikaners.

¹⁴¹ In Bloemfontein, for example, the average annual income per capita of Afrikaners was £180 and for other whites, £318. In the Johannesburg area Afrikaners' annual income averaged £162, compared to other whites' £349. However, as the statement suggests, substantial progress had been made as indicated by the Tweede (Second) Ekonomiese Kongres held in 1950. Afrikaner enterprises' share of South Africa's private industry increased to 11% (6% in 1939), whilst the number of Afrikaner manufacturers and directors increased by 295%. Hermann Giliomee, "The Afrikaner Economic Advance". In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 160.

(acquiring 70 seats, whilst the UP obtained 65), thus ushering in the era of apartheid.¹⁴² When the NP assumed political control, as Hermann Giliomee argues, “it greatly increased the scope of state intervention in the economy while fostering Afrikaner economic advance” particularly through the protection of the white worker and improvement of South Africa’s agricultural conditions.¹⁴³ For example, the government raised the average price of maize from 21s. 3d. in 1949 to 30s in 1952, whilst also assisting the agricultural sector through government subsidies, foreshadowing the scheme which prompted the establishment of the Afrikaans cinematic film industry.¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, public utilities/semi-state corporations were increasingly utilised by the NP to enhance modern economic activity amongst Afrikaners. J.L. Sadie maintains that public corporations – for example, the public broadcaster the South African Broadcasting Corporation, the energy and chemical company Sasol, the electricity public utility Escom (later Eskom), the iron and steel corporation ISCOR, and the *Nywerheidsontwikkelingskorporasie*/Industrial Development Corporation (NOK) – provided Afrikaners with the opportunity to obtain business experience which the private sector (particularly non-Afrikaner enterprises) could not offer.¹⁴⁵ The number of Afrikaners employed by the public corporations doubled from 1948 to 1968.¹⁴⁶ Afrikaner economic advancement was enhanced by the relationship maintained between the National Party and the Afrikaner business elite and cultural figures. Another extension of the 1939 Congress was the creation of the *Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut* (AHI) in 1942.¹⁴⁷ AHI was established with the objective of supporting and educating Afrikaner businessmen regarding the management of companies and adapting to modernising industries, discussing the development of the general economy, promoting interaction between the largest and smaller Afrikaner business enterprises, whilst (crucially) acting as an instrument of communication between the business sector and government – particularly after the NP became the ruling party in 1948.¹⁴⁸ Lastly, the NP

¹⁴² Newelle Stultz, *Afrikaner Politics in South Africa, 1934-1948*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), p. 143.

¹⁴³ Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 161.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 162.

¹⁴⁵ J.L. Sadie, *Die Ekonomiese Faktor in die Afrikaner-gemeenskap*, In H.W. van der Merwe (ed.), *Identiteit en Verandering*, (Kaapstad: Tafelberg, 1974), p. 98.

¹⁴⁶ Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 165.

¹⁴⁷ Willem Keizer, *Die Ekonomiese Opkoms van die Afrikaner vanaf die Eerste Ekonomiese Volkskongres van 1939 en ‘n Ontleding van sy Huidige Posisie in die Landseksonomie*, (Unpublished MA, University of Stellenbosch, 1966), p. 37.

¹⁴⁸ Grietjie Verhoef, “Die stigting van instellings as werktuie in die ekonomiese opbouproses van die Afrikaner sedert die Anglo-Boereoorlog”, Lecture, Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog-gedenklesing van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, University of Johannesburg, Pretoria, 18 September 2003, p. 218.

improved educational facilities for Afrikaners, such as the founding of medical and engineering faculties at Afrikaans universities, and the construction of technical and secondary schools for Afrikaners which could compare with educational institutions attended by wealthier, urbanised whites.¹⁴⁹

The combination of urbanisation, Afrikaner ethnic mobilisation, Afrikaner nationalists assuming political control, and the modernising economic development of South Africa during the first half of the twentieth century had a profound impact on the establishment and development of the Afrikaans cinematic industry. Not only had economic advancement increased the Afrikaner's financial position (consequently reducing the income gap), Afrikaners, though still dominating the agricultural sector throughout the 1950s, started to engage in all private business sectors – including the cinematic film industry. Afrikaner economic advancement was so effective that the question of “poor whites” virtually no longer existed by the time television services commenced in South Africa in 1976: “... Afrikaners had risen from a poor, underdeveloped population group to a prosperous bourgeoisie.”¹⁵⁰ The following tables demonstrate the degree in which Afrikaner economic engagement expanded up until the inauguration of the fully-fledged Afrikaans cinematic film industry:

Table 1:¹⁵¹ Percentage of Afrikaners Occupying Broad Sections of the Economy, 1936-1960			
	1936 (%)	1946 (%)	1960 (%)
Agriculture	41,2	30,3	16,0
"Blue Collar" and Manual Labour	31,3	40,7	40,5
"White Collar"	27,5	29,0	43,5
Total	100	100	100

¹⁴⁹ Hermann Giliomee, “The Afrikaner Economic Advance”. In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 168.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

¹⁵¹ J.L. Sadie. *Die Ekonomiese Faktor in die Afrikaner-gemeenskap*. In H.W. van der Merwe (ed.), *Identiteit en Verandering*. (Kaapstad: Tafelberg, 1974), p. 94.

Table 2:¹⁵² Afrikaner Representation in Main Occupational Groups, 1936-1960

	1936 (%)	1946 (%)	1960 (%)
Professional	23,9	37,3	42,0
Trade and Finances	23,4	32,4	41,6
Agriculture	86,7	85,7	84,5
Mining	37,7	63,6	70,5
Transport	54,7	73,0	77,0
Industrial	39,5	48,2	56,5
Services	43,2	49,9	64,5
Economically Active	50,8	53,6	54,3
Total Population	57,4	58,1	58,9

Table 3:¹⁵³ Income Ratio of Afrikaners to English-speaking Whites, 1946 and 1960

Year	Personal Income	P/Capita Income
1946	40 to 60	100 to 211
1960	47 to 53	100 to 156

Origins of the South African Cinematic Film Industry

The advent of South Africa's cinematic industry may be traced to the final years of the 19th century. After the discovery of gold and diamonds and the subsequent "influx of a large quasi-sophisticated population" and modernisation of urban centres, South Africa's urbanised white population felt a need for the theatrical arts.¹⁵⁴ Before cinema, the need for entertainment was best fulfilled by the circus,¹⁵⁵ musical performances (orchestras and military bands) and theatres situated in the larger South African towns. As will be shown, South Africa's small white population has continuously hampered the preservation and expansion of dramatic entertainment (both theatrical and cinematic). Nineteenth-century South Africa was no exception, as the small size of the population and absence of appropriate theatres, coupled with

¹⁵² Willem Keizer, *Die Ekonomiese Opkoms van die Afrikaner vanaf die Eerste Ekonomiese Volkskongres van 1939 en 'n Ontleding van sy Huidige Posisie in die Landseksonomie*, (Ongepubliseerde MA, University of Stellenbosch, 1966), p. 171.

¹⁵³ The table shows the narrowing of the per capita income gap between Afrikaners and English-speaking White South Africans within the indicated timeframe. Hermann Giliomee, "The Afrikaner Economic Advance". In H. Adam and H. Giliomee (eds.), *Ethnic Power Mobilized: Can South Africa Change?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 174.

¹⁵⁴ Thelma Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa, 1895-1940*, (Cape Town: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 1.

¹⁵⁵ Frank Fillis's Circus and Boswell's circus were arguably the most renowned.

the lack of an extensive transport system, created substantial difficulties for an industry to grow. However, during the 1880s and early 1890s circumstances improved considerably with the development and expansion of South Africa's railway networks,¹⁵⁶ the construction of sophisticated theatres in larger towns (Theatre Royal in Durban [1882], the Opera House in Pretoria [1893] and Good Hope Hall in Cape Town [1893]), the consequent introduction of theatrical companies (e.g. The Wheelers and Luscombe Searelle) and the importation of international artists, such as Camillio Urso (a renowned European violinist), among many others.¹⁵⁷ South African urbanised whites had a thirst for amusement best illustrated by Thelma Gutsche's account in *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in SA, 1895-1940*: "Appreciation of the zeitgeist of the period is only possible through realisation that the public was essentially sensation-minded and acutely responsive to any type of novelty."¹⁵⁸

The 19th century is recognised as a period of scientific and technological innovation, revolutionising industries across the world, including South Africa's entertainment industry. The most profoundly influential technological innovations revolved around the production of steam and electricity, hugely multiplying the mechanical power of human/animal capability. However, the applications of electric and steam power are not the only developments that ultimately shaped the course of the 20th century. Recording technologies such as the photograph and phonograph were significant in their own right as they allowed the experiences of the present to be captured and made available in the future. The South African public's sense datum, coupled with their appreciation of technological innovation, created an ambience suitable for the introduction of a motion picture industry.¹⁵⁹ The entertainment industry would be completely transformed by the introduction of Thomas A. Edison's invention of the kinetoscope (1889).¹⁶⁰ The technology of the kinetoscope was transferred to Johannesburg on 4 April 1895, and made available for public use by a Mr Witherell by 19 April 1895 in

¹⁵⁶ The discovery of diamonds in Kimberley (1867) and gold on the Witwatersrand (1886) contributed to the development of South Africa's railway networks. South Africa's railway circuit expanded at an average annual rate of 29% and 5,7% between 1875-1885 and 1885-1910, respectively. 1885 and 1910. Peter Perkins, Johann Fedderke & John Luiz, "An Analysis of Economic Infrastructure Development in South Africa", *South African Journal of Economics* 73 (2005), p. 215.

¹⁵⁷ Thelma Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa, 1895-1940*, (Cape Town: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 2.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6-7.

¹⁵⁹ "Motion-picture industry" and "Film industry" refer to the same concept.

¹⁶⁰ An early motion picture exhibition device that could only be viewed by one person through a window ("peep hole"). W. Bernard Carlson, & Michael E. Gorman, "Understanding Invention as a Cognitive Process: The Case of Thomas Edison and Early Motion Pictures, 1888-91", *Social Studies of Science* 20 (1990), 398.

Herwoods Arcade on Pritchard and President Streets in Johannesburg.¹⁶¹ The invention derived from its precursor, the phonograph (also developed by Edison), and was a rare show displaying pictures in motion. In August of the same year the South African public was introduced to the kinetophone – a device capable of synchronously playing kinetoscope films and phonographic music. The popularity of these inventions inevitably declined as they came to be regarded as “nothing more than fascinating toys.”¹⁶² Regardless, international businessmen realised that the demand for entertainment in South Africa created a penetrable market, as was illustrated by the Hyman brothers.

Constructing an “Uitlander” Cinematic Film Industry

The Vitascope, invented by Edison in 1895, enabled animated pictures to be cast onto a wall by means of a film projector in large theatrical halls, thus being the first institution to resemble the modern bioscope. South Africa’s introduction to projected film occurred in May 1896 with an exhibition¹⁶³ at the Empire Theatre of Varieties (Johannesburg) and managed by Edgar Hyman.¹⁶⁴ From 1896 to 1899 the exhibitions were mostly foreign (British and American) films – a trend that continues to this day. Hyman, enthralled by the innovation, acquired a camera from Charles Urban (an Anglo-American producer) through his brother Sydney Hyman, who acted as his British agent. The Warwick Trading Company,¹⁶⁵ located in London, employed Hyman, who shot short films mostly in Johannesburg.¹⁶⁶ These images were displayed in Johannesburg and across the globe. The South African War (1899-1902) was documented by Warwick with Edgar Hyman acting as the war correspondent. Warwick was accompanied by numerous film newsreel companies, but due to the nature of the guerrilla warfare, it was virtually impossible to capture military conflict/action on film. Consequently, producers in England filmed reconstructions of battles based on events during the war. The subjectivity of these recorded scenes may be evident, but it is true that modern documentaries still employ this tactic, or “dramatizations”, if actual events could not have been documented. What is certain, according to Martin Botha, is that these scenes acted as an influential

¹⁶¹ Thelma Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa, 1895-1940*, (Cape Town: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 9.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁶³ Demonstrating the skills of the magician, Carl Hertz.

¹⁶⁴ Edgar Hyman was a Victorian theatrical manager, cameraman and showman.

¹⁶⁵ Henceforth referred to as Warwick.

¹⁶⁶ He is arguably most renowned for shooting a short scene of Transvaal President, Paul Kruger, leaving his home in Pretoria in 1898. However, Joseph Rosenthal (Maguire and Baucus Company) stated in an interview that he was responsible for the film. Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1896-2010*, (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 21.

propaganda medium, as illustrated in post-apartheid productions such as *The Feast of the Uninvited* (2008).¹⁶⁷ Evidently, South Africa's film industry, even at its infancy, shared many commonalities with the general socio-economic conditions in South Africa during the end of the 19th century. The film industry, like the mining sector, was dominated by foreigners or "Uitlanders", as most Afrikaners were still reluctant to engage in modern economic activities.

After the conclusion of the South Africa War in 1902, the political and economic reconstruction of the country could commence.¹⁶⁸ Dramatic and musical performances were declining and, apart from the circus, South Africa's entertainment sector was dominated by the mobile bioscope.¹⁶⁹ Moving pictures enthralled the nation, subsequently exploited and organised by peripatetic impresarios such as W.H. Baker, H. Howard, W. Rees and most significantly W. Wolfram, "the pioneer of a considerable body of itinerant showmen."¹⁷⁰ Moving pictures were most popular in the Transvaal and Natal, and were exploited by companies such as the SA Bioscope Company (which showcased matches played between the Springboks and England), the Olympic Bioscope Company (exhibited films of the Olympic Games) and various other companies (Marconi Bioscope Co., Royal Bioscope Co. and American Electric Bioscope, to name a few).¹⁷¹ The industry in Natal was monopolised by Wolfram and Rees between 1902 and 1908. Most companies failed to survive for long periods of time as they were financially unprofitable, although some companies' involvement was based on a 'get-rich-quick-and-leave' mentality - a business endeavour involving only a few shows.¹⁷²

The remarkable popularity of motion pictures led to the construction of the first permanent bioscopes in South Africa. Unsurprisingly, the demand for film entertainment was exploited by an "Uitlander" – an Englishman to be exact. Frederick Mouillot, owner of Electric Theatres Ltd, would build the first permanent cinema in Durban. Opened on 29 July 1909, the exhibition hall was simply named the Electric Theatre and reserved for white audiences.¹⁷³ The first cinema reserved for black communities was opened by Electric Theatres Ltd on 11 December

¹⁶⁷ Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1896-2010*, (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 22.

¹⁶⁸ Discussed in previous section.

¹⁶⁹ The number of dramatic and musical performances declined when the Imperial troops were withdrawn and the public's enthusiasm waned after the true nature of the war's economic consequences became evident. Showmen subsequently exploited other forms of the entertainment industry. Thelma Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa, 1895-1940*, (Cape Town: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 60.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ Thelma Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa, 1895-1940*, (Cape Town: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 65.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁷³ Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1896-2010*, (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 22.

within the same year.¹⁷⁴ Also situated in Durban, the cinema attracted mostly Indians. Electric Theatres would expand its organised exhibition network to other cities, including Cape Town (September 1909), Port Elizabeth (February 1910) and Germiston (July 1910). Electric Theatres acquired and circulated films among these bioscopes, functioning in ways reminiscent of a distribution company. The initial success of the theatres prompted numerous aspiring entrepreneurs to try to penetrate the cinematic market. Exhibition theatres surfaced in the larger towns across South Africa, for example, Wolfram's Bioscope (Cape Town), Tivoli Theatre (Pretoria), Fisher's Elite Bioscope (Cape Town), the Bijou (Johannesburg, Fordsburg and Pretoria) and the Vaudette Theatre (East London, Krugersdorp and Kimberley) and numerous other less significant bioscopes. By 1910 Johannesburg had nearly twenty exhibition theatres, consequently resulting in intense competition amongst cinema owners. Most cinemas however, could not sustain profitability as the films exhibited were of poor quality, and admission prices were low (6d). At first exhibitors imported films directly from foreign film producers/agencies, but the method was deemed to be too expensive. Consequently, South Africa's first distribution companies, such as the African Film Syndicate and the Universal Film Supply Company, were established in 1911. Another milestone was achieved in the South African film industry in 1911, when *The Great Kimberley Diamond Robbery* became the first feature produced in South Africa by the foreign-owned Springbok Film Company.¹⁷⁵

By 1911 the South African cinematic industry was experiencing financial turmoil, with most exhibition theatres maintaining a precarious existence. The causes contributing to the problem were fourfold: a bioscope's high expenses exceeded turnover as income was generated simply in "shillings and sixpences"; the demand for cinematic entertainment had reached its climax in 1910, with theatre attendance declining significantly in the following year;¹⁷⁶ the increasing length of feature films meant obtaining productions would be more expensive; and lastly, local competition prevented exhibitors from increasing the prices of admission tickets.¹⁷⁷ Africa's Amalgamated Theatres Ltd, established by Australian born- Rufe Naylor and Edgar Hyman's Empire Theatre Company were the two most prominent exhibition companies in South Africa. Both controlled an extensive network of bioscopes across the country. The Empire Theatre Company, for example, owned the distribution agency African Film Syndicate. Through it and

¹⁷⁴ Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1896-2010*, (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 22.

¹⁷⁵ André I. Le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 3.

¹⁷⁶ Thelma Gutsche defines this climax as the "bioscope boom".

¹⁷⁷ Thelma Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa, 1895-1940*, (Cape Town: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 112.

to their own benefit, Empire administered the exclusive rights of the most profitable films. Fierce competition between Africa's Amalgamated Theatres, the Empire Theatre Company and independent bioscopes, however, once again created an unfavourable environment for bioscope owners. In March 1913 Empire Theatres, with its large exhibition circuit, underwent provisional liquidation, which unsettled the cinematic industry.¹⁷⁸ Africa's Amalgamated Theatres was also on the verge of being declared bankrupt. If the cinematic industry was to succeed, significant reorganisation of local exhibition and distribution would be necessary.

Reorganisation and Isidore W. Schlesinger's Cinematic Film Industry

A successful, New York-born financier, Isidore W. Schlesinger, maintained that the bioscope industry¹⁷⁹ would only succeed if business interests were consolidated under unified control, thus eliminating the biggest threat, namely competition. The absence of competition would allow the company to dictate the conditions of the industry (salaries and admission prices), whilst providing an opportunity to construct a lucrative network.¹⁸⁰ Schlesinger established the company African Theatres Trust Ltd, in 1913 and acquired all the assets of Empire Theatres (20 May 1913) and in June 1913 incorporated Africa's Amalgamated Theatres.¹⁸¹ After consulting South Africa's largest film distributors, i.e. George Smith and H.J. Stodel (along with five other firms), Schlesinger successfully negotiated the amalgamation of the distribution companies. South African film distribution was monopolised under the control exercised by Schlesinger's African Film Trust. On 5 May 1913 Schlesinger founded the newsreel, *African Mirror*, which was managed by Joseph Albrecht (imported from Britain).¹⁸² By 1915 African Theatres Trust had reorganised itself to establish three companies, each serving a different purpose: African Theatre Trust dealt with administration; African Film Trust acted as the import/distribution agency; and African Film Productions would become South Africa's first local film producer. In 1969 *The Star's* Financial Editor John Marvin stated:

¹⁷⁸ Thelma Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa, 1895-1940*, (Cape Town: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 116.

¹⁷⁹ "Bioscope" and "cinema" refer to the same phenomenon. "Bioscope" is the term used by many distributors and producers in the 20th century.

¹⁸⁰ Thelma Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa, 1895-1940*, (Cape Town: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 117.

¹⁸¹ André I. Le Roux & Lilla Fourie. *Filmverlede, Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 2.

¹⁸² Emma Sandon, "The Life and Times of the South African Newsreel from 1910 to 1948", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 39 (2013), 668. Joseph Albrecht was a producer, writer and director, known for *A Border Scourge* (1917), *Mystery of the Great Zimbabwe* (1920) and *Copper Mask* (1919).

“South Africa’s promise was amply fulfilled and ‘I.W.’ had the satisfaction of bringing entertainment in many different forms to most parts of the country. At a time when Walt Disney was barely out of swaddling clothes, he experimented with cartoon films and was making advertising films when they were still in the embryo stage in America”.¹⁸³

Local film production continued after the First World War (1914-1918), since the circumstances of war had decreased the supply and influx of foreign productions. Furthermore, most films exhibited in the Union were developed in the USA, thus allowing American distributors to dictate market prices. Schlesinger recognised an opportunity and suggested developing South African films for both the local and international market. Film studios were subsequently constructed in Killarney, a Johannesburg suburb. By January 1916 production commenced before the construction of Killarney Film Studios was entirely completed and the first topical feature *A Story of the Rand* (1916) was produced.¹⁸⁴ Schlesinger employed American film producer Lorrimer Johnston, who (along with his wife Caroline Cook)¹⁸⁵ wrote the script. Like *A Story of the Rand*, early African Film Productions’ (AFP) films incorporated themes based on actual events integrated with fictional romance, thus incorporating characteristics reminiscent of a docudrama. Between 1910 and 1925 African Film Productions produced no less than 43 features, including epics such as *De Voortrekkers/Winning a Continent* (1916), *King Solomon’s Mines* (1918) and *Allan Quatermain* (1919). These features attempted to emulate American epics, such as D.W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) and *Intolerance* (1916). As André le Roux and Lilla Fourie maintain:

“The first films developed in South Africa were mainly based on the interpretation of preceding American films, characterised by the sheer wickedness of villains, the utter heroism of heroes, whilst also providing a meaningful, detailed narrative which spans many years”.¹⁸⁶

The emulation is understandable, considering that America’s innovative film applications made the USA – more specifically Hollywood – the colossus of the world’s cinematic industries.

The Era of Sound, New Competition and RARO

¹⁸³ *The Star*, 30 April 1969, John Marvin, “Multimillion Rand South African Deal”.

¹⁸⁴ André I. Le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 3.

¹⁸⁵ Cook would also star in the film.

¹⁸⁶ André I. Le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 3.

In 1927 the 14 year monopoly exercised by African Theatres was broken by the arrival of the phono film or “talk film”. Kinemas South Africa Ltd, founded by Sydney Hayden,¹⁸⁷ utilised the media sensation around the phono film, subsequently constructing theatres across South Africa that exhibited “talkies” exclusively. Though initially crude and primitive, the introduction of sound ushered in a new era of competition – a duopoly – in South African exhibition/distribution. Within the space of two years Kinemas managed to add 44 bioscopes to their exhibition network.¹⁸⁸ Not to be outdone, African Theatres responded by building additional large cinemas and smaller bioscopes in the larger towns. The public benefited as competition guaranteed a wider selection of films. Despite the economic hardship caused by the Great Depression after 1929 and the steady decline of public patronage, the expansion of both companies continued until foreign competition penetrated the market. The American production and distribution company Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer founded a distribution agency in Johannesburg, which distributed their own films in South Africa. The intense parallel expansion by African Theatres and Kinemas became commercially unsustainable, coupled with the fact that South Africa had not yet recovered from the damage inflicted by the economic depression. Competition was once again exhausting the resources of the South African industry, considering that the constant expansion of exhibition networks resulted in an excess number of cinemas.¹⁸⁹ The precarious economic environment brought about the amalgamation of African Theatres Trust and Kinemas Ltd in December 1931, subsequently establishing two companies: one was African Consolidated Theatres Ltd, which would be responsible solely for administration, and the other was African Consolidated Films Ltd, which managed the exhibition and distribution interests of the merger.¹⁹⁰

Economic conditions worsened in the early 1930s and audience attendance continued to decline. At this stage three companies dominated South Africa’s exhibition and distribution circuit. African Consolidated Theatres/Films managed the bulk of films exhibited and distributed in the Union. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) circulated films produced by themselves, British and Dominion Films, United Artists and London Films.¹⁹¹ The third party, Union Theatres Ltd,

¹⁸⁷ An Australian Exhibitor.

¹⁸⁸ Thelma Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa, 1895-1940*, (Cape Town: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 205.

¹⁸⁹ Some towns had numerous cinemas, notwithstanding the fact that their populations could barely support one.

¹⁹⁰ Thelma Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa, 1895-1940*, (Cape Town: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 235.

¹⁹¹ All foreign film-producing companies.

controlled by Schlesinger's interests, was initially and specially registered (13 October 1931) to exhibit 'talkie' films produced by MGM.¹⁹² The reason was MGM's dissatisfaction with the financial terms provided by African Consolidated Trust/Films. It is worth noting that MGM produced the highest-quality and most expensive films at the time, thus making their productions the most desirable. "Super cinemas"¹⁹³ were being built, such as MGM's Metro Theatre (Johannesburg), African Trust's Coliseum (Johannesburg), the Capitol (Pretoria) and the Alhambra (Cape Town). To the relief of the film industry, South Africa managed to recover progressively from the economic depression after the Union went off the gold standard¹⁹⁴ and adopted the fiat monetary system¹⁹⁵ in December 1932.¹⁹⁶

South Africa's cinematic film industry sustained a period of financial prosperity after the depression, attracting foreign interests in pursuit of lucrative markets. In April 1937 Otto W. Bolle of the Twentieth-Century-Fox Film Corporation visited South Africa to decide whether the country could establish a circuit in the country. African Consolidated Films ceased the distribution of Twentieth-Century-Fox Films in South Africa. The cinematic industry was deemed economically stable¹⁹⁷ and as such, Twentieth-Century-Fox Film (SA) Pty Ltd was established in May of 1938. Twentieth-Century-Fox rapidly expanded its circuit in South Africa (between May 1938 and September 1940 38 cinemas were opened). The company's success can be attributed to its incorporation of commercial social responsibility as the institution promoted local employment and its cinemas being built by South African enterprises.¹⁹⁸ The United Artists Film Company also established distribution offices in SA after reaching an agreement to distribute its films through the networks of Twentieth-Century-Fox's cinemas.¹⁹⁹ The dependence of American producers, distributors and exhibitors on the

¹⁹² Thelma Gutsche, *The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa, 1895-1940*, (Cape Town: Citadel Press, 1972), p. 232.

¹⁹³ Theatres which could accommodate a large audience.

¹⁹⁴ A monetary system where a country's currency or paper money (standard economic unit of account) has a value directly linked to its gold reserves.

¹⁹⁵ Legal tender is not based on a physical commodity such as gold. Value is calculated according to scarcity. The amount of an economy's money and interest rates can be adjusted, if required. The fiat monetary system is currently used by South Africa.

¹⁹⁶ R. Leslie, "South Africa and the Gold Standard", *The Economic Journal* 43 (1933), p. 92.

¹⁹⁷ This was after the country adopted the fiat monetary system and recovered from the Great Depression.

¹⁹⁸ Corporative Social Responsibility (CSB) is used as a marketing strategy to attract consumers within an area. Twentieth-Century-Fox's use of CSB was profit-driven as the company promoted its contribution to South African employment.

¹⁹⁹ David J. Gainer, *Hollywood, African Consolidated Films and "Bioskoopbeskawing", or Bioscope Culture: Aspects of American Culture in Cape Town, 1945-1960*, (Unpublished Phd, University of Cape Town, 2000).

South African market increased after the outbreak of the Second World War. Caught up in war, Europe's demand for Hollywood product temporarily declined.

In 1931 AFP initiated the production of local films with a soundtrack by developing the short film *Sarie Marie*. AFP subsequently produced the first Afrikaans feature, *Moedertjie* (1931). The *Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Taal, Lettere en Kuns*²⁰⁰ awarded director/producer, Joseph Albrecht, a golden medal in honour of the milestone. Forty local productions were produced between 1930 and 1956. Famous productions include *Geboortegrond* (1946), *Cry the Beloved Country* (1951) and *Fifty-Vyftig* (1953). The bulk of the films were produced in Afrikaans (30) and by African Film Productions. The most prominent Afrikaans directors and producers, though scarce in number, were Pierre de Wet (created South Africa's first Afrikaans musical, *Kom Saam, Vanaand* [1949]) and Jamie Uys. Afrikaans productions provided Afrikaners with cinematic escapism, typically in the form of melodramas or comedies.²⁰¹

As with the general trend of South Africa's modern economy,²⁰² Afrikaners' full engagement with the film industry, i.e. production, distribution and exhibition, developed gradually and not without the assistance of the government and other cultural organisations (as will be expanded upon). This thesis argues that the Afrikaans film industry was formally established in the 1950s when government subsidisation was introduced; however, a few Afrikaners did venture into the industry before then. One earlier endeavour had its origins in the nationalistic movement stimulated by the *Voortrekker Eeufees* (Centenary celebrations) in 1938.²⁰³ In 1935 the Minister of Railways and Ports, Oswald Pirow,²⁰⁴ instructed African Film Productions to develop a film based on the history of South Africa (1486-1910). The feature was produced in English and Afrikaans, directed by Joseph Albrecht, included mass crowd scenes consisting of 8 000 blacks and 3 500 whites, a cast consisting of approximately 150 people and had a production budget of £68 025.²⁰⁵ The intention was to obtain foreign publicity and stimulate national consciousness. The first Afrikaans screening of the production – *Die Bou van 'n*

²⁰⁰ English Translation: The South African Academy for Language, Literature and Art.

²⁰¹ Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1896-2010*, (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 43.

²⁰² As discussed in the previous chapter, South Africa's economy started to modernise at the end of the 19th century.

²⁰³ The Voortrekker Eeufees, held in 1938, was a centenary celebration by Afrikaners who commemorated the eastern Cape frontier farmers who left the Cape Colony in the 1830s.

²⁰⁴ Pirow – a Nazi sympathizer, anti-communist and far-right nationalist – would hold office as Minister of Justice and Minister of Defence in 1929-1933 and 1933-1939 respectively. Robert L. McCormack, "Man with a Mission: Oswald Pirow and South African Airways, 1933-1939", *Journal of African History* 20 (1979), p. 543-544, p. 547.

²⁰⁵ André I. Le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 30.

Nasie/They Built a Nation – took place at the Capitol Theatre on 12 December 1938. Dr Hans Rompel filmed the centenary celebrations and produced the documentary, *'n Nasie Hou Koers*. At the time Rompel was playing an integral part in the development of the Afrikaans industry and is generally regarded as one of the first formal Afrikaans film critics in South Africa – writing for *Die Brandwag*, *Die Huisgenoot* and *Die Burger*.²⁰⁶ The upsurge of Afrikaner nationalism emanating from the celebrations, coupled with the *Eerste Ekonomiese Volkskongres*²⁰⁷ (First Economic People's Congress) held in 1939,²⁰⁸ led to the formation of the *Reddingsdaadbond-Amateur-Rolprent-Organisasie*²⁰⁹ (RARO) in July 1940, with future State President Dr Nico Diederichs acting as its first chairperson.²¹⁰

Films were produced which emphasised the Afrikaner lifestyle, people and events. RARO objected to foreign interests penetrating and dominating South African industries. Under the influence of Dr Hans Rompel, RARO judged the foreign dominance of South African screens as a configuration of cultural imperialism. RARO served as an alternative industry, producing politicized films as both Afrikaner audiences and nationalism grew. In 1941 nationalists constructed a distribution circuit by establishing the *Volksbioskope Maatskappy Beperk*²¹¹ (People's Bioscopes Pty Ltd). The main objective of the newly established company was to distribute RARO's 16 mm films. Apart from their films being distributed in mainly rural theatres, RARO's motion pictures would be exhibited in 300 schools across the state.²¹² However, to sustain continued profitability VOB, despite its nationalistic inclinations, also distributed American productions. After the National Party came into power in 1948, RARO's and VOB's public function was deemed obsolete and both companies consequently dissolved.²¹³

In 1947 the *Christelike Afrikaanse Radio en Film Organisasie*²¹⁴ (CARFO) was commissioned by the NG church and undertook to produce films infused with a Christian, conservative

²⁰⁶ Leon van Nierop, *Daar Doer in die Fliek: 'n Persoonlike Blik op die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Rolprent*, (Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2016), p. 32.

²⁰⁷ As indicated, the objective of the Eerste Ekonomiese Volkskongres was to provide a framework that could mobilise and increase the purchasing power of the Afrikaner.

²⁰⁸ Herman Giliomee, "Ethnic Business and Economic Empowerment: The Afrikaner case, 1915-1970", *South African Journal of Economics* 76 (2008), p. 771.

²⁰⁹ English Translation: Rescue Action Association Amateur Film Organisation.

²¹⁰ Leon van Nierop, *Daar Doer in die Fliek: 'n Persoonlike Blik op die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Rolprent*, (Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2016), p. 36.

²¹¹ Abbreviation: VOB.

²¹² Leon van Nierop, *Daar Doer in die Fliek: 'n Persoonlike Blik op die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Rolprent*, (Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2016), p. 36.

²¹³ Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1986-2010*, (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 30.

²¹⁴ English Translation: Christian Afrikaans Radio and Film Organisation

message. A group of pastors acted on the Board of Directors, whilst Ds Willie Alheit became CARFO's first Chief Executive. CARFO's films were distributed on the circuit of school and church halls. Leon van Nierop argues: "Some of CARFO's films were dismissed as mere sermons, although a large number of rural citizens in particular, watched them".²¹⁵ Van Nierop adds that the establishment of the organisation was significant in the development of Afrikaans film productions as it created a connection between the church and industry. "People [Afrikaners] were in fact wary of the new 'unholy' innovation (bioscope)".²¹⁶ The involvement of the church perhaps contributed to Afrikaners embracing the industry. CARFO's scripts were mostly written by Ds James Norval, whilst Kappie Botha regularly directed the productions, including *Ek Sal Opstaan* (1959) and *Spore in die Modder* (1961).²¹⁷

Meanwhile, South Africa's paramount distributors (The "Big Three") continued their aggressive campaign to gain control of the market. African Consolidated Films (ACF) took advantage of the rivalry amongst American producers and negotiated long-standing contracts with studios, including Warner Brothers, RKO, Disney, Columbia and Paramount, to name a few. The distribution circuit of a film would usually last three years and would consist of three stages. The first "round" for a film was its distribution in the largest towns with the most luxurious and largest cinemas (Empire or Coliseum, for example), after it had been approved by the Censorship Board. This stage would last approximately three to six months. Stage two, a period also consisting of three to six months, would see the film circulated in smaller European cinemas, as well as the largest non-white cinemas in urban areas (e.g. Star Theatre in District Six). Finally, circulation would enter stage three, meaning that a film would be sent to the older, smaller cinemas located in the smallest villages and/or non-European urban areas.²¹⁸ Independent cinemas that desired to exhibit ACF films were locked into long-term contracts largely dictated by the distributor. For example, independent exhibitors had no control over the films that they received from ACF, refunds were not available, and a cinema was responsible for the transport costs if a different film was requested.²¹⁹ If deemed uncooperative,

²¹⁵ Leon van Nierop, *Daar Doer in die Fliek: 'n Persoonlike Blik op die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Rolprent*, (Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2016), p. 60.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ David J. Gainer, *Hollywood, African Consolidated Films and "Bioskoopbeskawing", or Bioscope Culture: Aspects of American Culture in Cape Town, 1945-1960*, (Unpublished Phd, University of Cape Town, 2000), p. 91.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

an independent cinema owner would be supplied with previously exhibited or substandard films.²²⁰

Jamie Uys Filmproduksies and the Advent of the Afrikaans Cinematic Era

John Schlesinger assumed control of African Consolidated Trusts when his father and its founder, Isidore W. Schlesinger, passed away in 1949. ACF, under new authority, continued its attempts to expand the local film industry. However, South Africa's cinematic industry would soon be subjugated to American interests. In 1956 Twentieth-Century-Fox Film Ltd bought out the Schlesinger empire, consequently controlling more than three-quarters of South Africa's distribution network. Only a few independent film distributors/exhibitors operated outside the duopoly exercised by Fox and MGM, including the Pretoria-based Inrybelange Ltd (Inrybelange). Inrybelange would develop into Ster Films/Theatres, specializing in the circulation of Afrikaans productions. Sanlam managed the company and – as will be expanded upon in the following sections – would revolutionise the local cinematic industry in the 1960s.²²¹

During the early 1950s African Film Productions employed a young Afrikaner, Jacobus Johannes Uys (better known as Jamie), who would become the pioneer of the Afrikaans film producing industry. Uys soon resigned as he maintained that ACF limited writers artistically. Uys, when working for ACF, wrote two scripts, *Daar Doer In Die Stad* and *Hensop*, but they were never turned into films, since Schlesinger thought them too controversial. Consequently, Jamie Uys decided to become an independent producer. Uys produced *Daar Doer in die Bosveld* (1951) for Swan Films, whilst operating as the scriptwriter, director, photographer and main actor. The production was a complete commercial success as a result of overwhelming support provided from the Afrikaner community. Encouraged by success, Jamie Uys – along with Johan Daniel Wilhelm Human van der Vijver – registered what would become South Africa's most influential film production company, *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* Ltd, on 23 February 1954.²²² The company's main objective was to develop and expand the Afrikaans film industry. The success achieved by *Daar Doer in die Bosveld* was unprecedented; however, *Jamie Uys Films* still deemed the climate for Afrikaans productions as unfavourable.

²²⁰ Termed "killer" films.

²²¹ Sanlam Archives (SA), Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, *Die Fakkel*, "Rolprentwese in Suid-Afrika", August 1970, p. 14.

²²² University Stellenbosch Gericke Library Document Centre (GLD), H.B Thom collection (HBT), 191 KAV. 7V.1. (1) Background of the company: "Akte van oprigting van Jamie Uys Filmproduksies", 23 Februarie 1954, p. 1.

Understandably, financiers were initially reluctant to invest in the production company. The Afrikaans public rather supported foreign productions because of the poor quality associated with most local films.²²³ By 1956 *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* accumulated a loss of approximately £16 000.²²⁴ As a result, government intervention became a necessity to sustain production. On 16 July 1956 the Motion Picture Producers Association (MPPA) was established with Uys acting as its chairman.²²⁵

The MPPA, headed by Uys, approached the government to request financial support. Foreign competition, the entertainment tax on local films and investors' lack of trust were regarded as impediments for the growth of the Afrikaans cinematic industry.

“Films imported from America, England and other foreign countries have already regained their production costs. Thus the income generated in South Africa is pure profit... Yet local and imported productions are equally taxed”.²²⁶

The MPPA's argument can be justified, as imported productions were taxed on profits, whilst local films were taxed on the basis of production costs as well as profits. In 1955 *Jamie Uys Films* produced *Geld soos Bossies* with a budget of £10 000. The film was distributed by the Schlesinger organisation and exhibited in 165 bioscopes.²²⁷ According to Uys, the film's popularity exceeded all expectations.²²⁸ Nevertheless, the film generated a profit of only £110

²²³ Defining “Quality” in Cinematic Film and Television Releases: First and foremost, productions are never guaranteed to become box office successes. Even films critically acclaimed, such as *Man on the Moon* (released in 1999, distributed by Universal Pictures and nominated for the Golden Globe Award for *Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy*), can flop at the box office. However, producers are aware that including and combining certain elements and –importantly- people into their films could enhance the quality of the productions and as such, increase the popularity of films within the targeted market. Numerous factors determine a film's quality, such as cinematographers, the directors, actors (“star power”), screenwriters (storytelling), technology (for example cameras and special effects) and musicians (soundtracks) to name a few. As these factors are in high demand, acquiring the finest mostly require great financial investments particularly in the highly inflated market of the global cinematic film and television industry. This, coupled with Hollywood's use of English, largely contributes to the USA's stronghold over the global cinematic and television industry. Greater financial investments also enhances a film's marketing ability. Note, this thesis does not suggest that productions lacking large-scale budgets cannot generate high box office revenues. A production has to connect with its audience. Examples of low budget cinematic film productions receiving great box office revenues include *Rocky* (1976) and *Halloween* (1978). However, large-scale financial investments enhances the probability.

²²⁴ GLD, H.B. Thom collection (HBT), 191 KAV.7v.1. (3/1) Background of the company: “Huidige Samestelling van ons maatskappy: Memorandum aangaande Jamie Uys Filmproduksies Beperk”, (n.d.), p. 2.

²²⁵ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 32.

²²⁶ National Archives Repository (SAB), Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary 163 (MES), Addendum: H3/5, Volume 2, Correspondence, “Telegram of Jamie Uys Filmsproduksies Ltd: Request for subsidisation”, (N.D), p. 2.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²²⁸ The exact figures were unfortunately not provided.

in 1955 and *Jamie Uys Films* was obliged to pay approximately £8 000 in entertainment tax (£6 119. 13s on production costs).²²⁹ Such profit and loss accounts deterred investors from financing Afrikaans film producers. *Jamie Uys Films* stated that the amounts paid to bioscope owners were reasonable as local distributors/exhibitors were particularly sympathetic towards their product. The MPPA referenced countries (such as Britain) where governments were willing to finance producers in the form of subsidies to compensate for the influx of American productions. South Africa's government responded positively and in 1956 established a state subsidy scheme administered through the Department of Trade and Industry (a detailed account of the scheme will be provided below). Contemporary local producers who were consulted, such as Christa Lategan and Franz Marx maintain that subsidisation was essential in developing a local product, but that its implementation was incorrect.²³⁰ In 1956 the future development of the Afrikaans film industry seemed secure, but the industry would no longer function as a free enterprise. Though the South African government conceived of the South African economy as capitalist, subsidisation was an integral part of the country's economic structures. Subsidisation entrenched state interference.

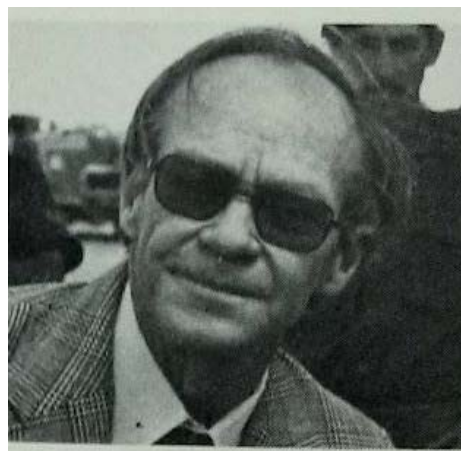


Illustration 1: Jamie Uys²³¹

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the social, economic and political backdrop of the Afrikaans film industry before the 1960s. The Afrikaans film industry was shaped by a growing national

²²⁹ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary 163 (MES), Addendum: H3/5, Volume 2, Correspondence, "Telegram of Jamie Uys Filmsproduksies Ltd: Request for subsidisation", (n.d.), p. 6.

²³⁰ Franz Marx, interview by Coenraad J. Coetzee, Stellenbosch University, April 15, 2015. Christa Lategan, e-mail message to Coenraad J. Coetzee, June 29, 2016.

²³¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, *SA Film Weekly* Article: "Government subsidy – Findings clash", 24 June 1977, p. 2.

consciousness, which manifested itself in the Afrikaners' socio-economic movement. The film industry had to adapt to its environment in order to survive and develop. A business has to exploit the environment and public demand to meet the needs of the targeted consumer. During the rise of the industry, South Africa's appreciation of the entertainment arts was overwhelmingly exploited by foreigners. Foreign domination of the industry must be attributed to a lack of local experience and knowledge, a lack of local financial sources and the intense competition within a small market. Simply stated, it was impossible for a local product to compete with those offered from abroad. The significance of the size and heterogeneity of the South African market should not be understated. South Africa was and still is a culturally diverse society. Cultural and economic differences, coupled with separate development, restricted the market for an Afrikaans film to penetrate. This was a condition recognised by the local industry and government alike, as will be explained below. If separate development did not exist, one could understandably argue that the market constraints on the Afrikaans cinematic film industry would have been fewer. Unfortunately, historical reflection cannot be used to answer "what-if" questions helpfully, as imagined alternative pasts lack historical substance or facts/sources to support any statement. In the light of these limitations, the development of an Afrikaans film industry required state intervention. The consequent collaboration between the government and the local industry (MPPA) produced a subsidy scheme which completely transformed the face of the South African film industry. A fully-fledged Afrikaans cinematic film industry had finally emerged.

Chapter Two: Development and Limitations of the Afrikaans Cinematic Film Industry, c.1956-c.1970

“Yet politics has everything to do with South Africa. Just how the South African industry will define its responsibilities in the worsening political context remains to be seen.” – Keyan Tomaselli¹

Introduction

The implementation of the South African subsidy scheme in 1956 contributed to the expansion of the Afrikaans cinematic industry. The number of Afrikaans film producers had effectively increased before the introduction of television in the 1970s. However, film subsidisation should not be regarded as the only factor that shaped the conditions of the industry. This chapter will attempt to elucidate the forces that contributed to the development of the Afrikaans cinematic industry between 1956-1970 by discussing the subsidy formula illustrating the effects of subsidisation on the industry; the socio-cultural value of Afrikaans films; the requirements of South African censorship; the South African and international markets; foreign competition and participation in Afrikaans productions; the localisation of South African exhibition and distribution; and the relationship between Afrikaans producers and distributors. The aim of this chapter is to illustrate how these forces created an unstable local cinematic environment when the South African government agreed to introduce SABC-TV. A case study of *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* Ltd/*Kavalier Films* Ltd will entail a discussion of its history (1954-1970), its influence and the significance of the company as a case study, as well as considering examples of productions (*Hans en die Rooinek* [1961], *Debbie* [1965] and *Hoor My Lied* [1967]) relevant to this reflection.

The Construction of an Industry through State Intervention

Demand, a dynamic influence of the economic market, is socially constructed. Producers are highly cognisant of the influences impacting on the perceptions, expectations and appreciations of the targeted consumer, exploiting socio-economic circumstances that in turn manipulates them. The producer utilises strategies to manufacture and promote a sought-after product that reflects social demands. Consequently, agents within an industry will try to shape the desires and needs of the public through effective marketing techniques. The producers in an industry, however, are amongst several forces that have the ability to influence these needs and desires.

¹ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 229.

Pierre Bourdieu maintains that “what specifically characterises that demand is, in large part, produced by the state.”²

The state, through its own initiatives and objectives, establishes a socio-economic environment that effects both the producer and consumer. Political regulation and legislation, taxation, subsidisation, persuasion and nationalisation indicate the (socio-economic and/or political) aims of a government; such factors contribute to the nature of an economic market and as such determines the equilibrium between supply and demand. The larger companies are paramount as their economic contributions can sway political decisions – a consequence “far more powerful than mere advertising for shaping that demand.”³ State-constructed markets would occasionally provide their cooperation (financial or legislative) to influential figures/companies, ultimately for the benefit of their own political, social and economic objectives.

State intervention/regulation, although naturally differing in degree considering economic models found in different countries, is a phenomenon encountered in all markets across the globe, with few sectors of economic life remaining autonomous. Neville Abraham argues that “employers, workers and consumers have come to take much of this for granted” and, as voters, should “make even greater demands of their representatives.”⁴ Regardless of this situation, it seems that governments would always have a rationale behind their involvement in an industry – whether this be achieving the economic objectives (i.e. battling inflation, unemployment and/or an unstable national currency) of the government, or dealing with pressures originating from public opinion, corporations or trade unions. The state therefore has the obligation to establish economic conditions that expand and sustain their reputation or authority amongst voters, whilst simultaneously adhering to their own socio-political principles.

The integration of state and industry has completely altered our understanding of the nature of a corporation. External pressures experienced by a business mean that the purpose behind the existence of an enterprise extends beyond simply the accumulation of wealth, but would include corporate social investment, for example. Problems which may arise as a result of government involvement, however, are twofold: the interests of a company and government may conflict with one another; and difficulties faced by government reflect in all areas of a

² Pierre Bourdieu, *The Social Structures of the Economy*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), p. 89.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Neville Abrahams, *Big Business and Government: The New Disorder* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1974), p. 23.

country, especially in the economic sector.⁵ The cooperation and aims developed by state and company must be unambiguous and explicit to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding and tension.

Having briefly discussed the concept of state intervention, it is necessary to identify how governments are involved in an economy. Governments, particularly since the turn of the 20th century, have fulfilled numerous and – what governments would argue – essential functions in the economic sector. Neville Abraham, author of *Big Business and Government: A New Disorder* (1974), has identified a number of roles that the state plays in modern economic life, although only the most relevant for this reflection will be dealt with here. Firstly, the state acts as a supervisor and manipulator (through policymakers) of the economy – a role that Abraham's maintains is the most intrusive and least comprehensible.⁶ The expansion of government's involvement in the economic sector over the course of the last century differs from the theories propounded by classical capitalist economists, such as Adam Smith. Laissez faire, the dominant economic philosophy exercised by most states in the 19th century, for example, has gradually been replaced with other economic models. The integration of state and economy, once deemed an obstacle to growth, is widely perceived as essential for the development of a financial system.⁷ Agents must be held accountable, for the events of the past – economic depressions, extreme poverty, segregation, immigration, wars, and so on – created a climate where scholars could develop new economic theories, for example Marxism, capitalism and socialism. Many academics have tried to determine which economic philosophy would be the most efficient in managing the relationship between the public and private sector and, as expected, this has been a topic of continuous dispute and disagreement. The difficult question that needs to be answered is how and to what degree governments should intervene.

Secondly, domestic pressures for government intervention have forced it to pursue economic policies, which evidently shape corporate activity. As such, the state may choose to supply resources to a particular producer within an industry, assisting in the realisation of certain business undertakings. The provision of resources varies in terms of methods, financing, facilities and staff.⁸ The state's assistance can be direct or through associated organisations.

⁵ Neville Abrahams, *Big Business and Government: The New Disorder* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1974), p. 5.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23-24.

⁷ Vito Tanzi, *The Changing Role of the State in the Economy: a Historical Perspective*, working paper prepared for the International Monetary Fund, (Brazil, 1997), p. 9.

⁸ *Ibid.*

Either way, governments are meticulous in selecting companies/economic sectors to allocate their resources. Examples include lending, insurance, taxation schemes, training and subsidisation. Promoting and developing sectors of the economy may be problematic and controversial, as certain companies or figures may perceive the state's support as partial. Consequently, states are obliged to justify their decisions of expenditures.

Government intervention is a massive and arduous process as the state is required to ensure economic growth whilst simultaneously safeguarding its position of political power, or more simply stated, keeping the important voters pleased.⁹ In theory, and indeed as history has sometimes demonstrated, developed economies construct a strong foundation for the social upliftment of a population, allowing governments to maintain their position of power. However, placing too much emphasis on either economic growth or social upliftment, and not maintaining an effective balance, could lead to a deterioration of economic conditions within an industry, community or country.

When political leaders engage with economic development, their competence in these matters must be scrutinised carefully. Some politicians may possess an inadequate knowledge of fiscal issues, as they come from unrelated disciplines. Vito Tanzi declares these politicians as 'unsophisticated', stating that such figures are naïve, accepting over-simplified notions of economic functionality.¹⁰ Leaders may rely too heavily on economic theories or successful but out-dated policies, some of which have been proven to be obsolete. Individuals may also abuse their position of power, whilst manipulating economic policies for their personal interests. Lastly, ideological beliefs held by the government itself may ultimately determine the method and level of government intervention. The norms and perceptions of the state, expressed in its political beliefs, influence the level and methods of economic growth. The success of an industry lies in its ability to adapt to its ever-changing environment created by the symbiotic triple alliance between state, business and society. Government and society – as well as their relationship with one another – are external forces (macro environment), responsible for shaping the decision-making process found within the company/industry. Since these external forces are constantly changing, like a living organism if you will, adaptation needs to occur on a continuous basis. The collection of data on government and the market provides the necessary

⁹ At least in a state where there is a free market and some sort of voting system.

¹⁰ Vito Tanzi, *The Changing Role of the State in the Economy: a Historical Perspective*, working paper prepared for the International Monetary Fund, (Brazil, 1997), p. 6.

cues to exploit the context and maximise profits.¹¹ The rise, development and failure of South African industries can be accredited to these interpretations, of which the Afrikaans film/cinematic industry is no exception. Every industry is dependent on the system of ideals projected by the government, market and leading industry figures, which act as the foundation of economic theory/policy. The importance of these actors business principles cannot be understated.

Subsidisation and Film

Apart from the practice in communist or centrally planned economies, subsidisation - as it occurs in film industries - frequently stems from commercial considerations. However, some governments also subsidise production to varying degrees, as film projects national prestige as well as providing cultural communication. During the 1960s, for example, films produced in Argentina were categorized by its Censorship Committee of the National Cinematographic Institute (NCI). The NCI, a state organisation, classified each film according to its cultural and artistic value. If a production was deemed eligible, the film company would receive a subsidy derived from the box-office admissions tax.¹² In Belgium the Ministry of Economic Affairs subsidised local productions to the amount of 80% of the admissions tax collected during a feature's exhibition run.¹³ But the United Kingdom provided one of the most prominent examples of subsidisation after the British Board of Trade implemented the Cinematograph Films Act of 1957. The act stipulated that the levy collected by cinema owners on each seat sold during a British film's exhibition run were to be paid to local producers.¹⁴ Governments mostly provide subsidies with the aim of stimulating the expansion of an industry until a point has been reached that support can ultimately be withdrawn. South Africa, along with many other national film industries, utilised subsidisation as a means to protect the interests of local producers against foreign domination – Hollywood in particular.¹⁵

Effects of Film Subsidisation on the Afrikaans Cinematic Industry

The implementation of the subsidy scheme removed many of the financial risks involved in film production. As will be expanded upon, government created a subsidy system that

¹¹ Karl E. Weick, *Sensemaking in Organizations*, (London: Sage Publications, 1995), p. 50.

¹² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 11, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 2, Study by George C. Vietheer: "Foreign Film Subsidies", March 1969, p. 71.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹⁴ In 1969 the levy was one-ninth of the amount, if the total gross admission price exceeded 11 pence.

¹⁵ As was the case with 20th Century Fox's acquisition of the Schlesinger interests.

addressed the commercial grievances of the MPPA, i.e. entertainment tax and foreign competition/control of the “limited South African market”.¹⁶ *Die Bosvelders* (1958), made by Jamie Uys, cost R30 000¹⁷ to produce, however, the film had to accumulate R48 000¹⁸ to recover production expenditures as R18 000 (entertainment tax) had to be allocated to government.¹⁹ Subsidisation provided the Afrikaans industry with an opportunity not only to recoup expenses, but, more significantly, to maintain continued profitability. Studies conducted by the Department of Trade and Industries illustrated that only 4 out of 88 films would have been profitable between 1970 and 1974 without subsidisation.²⁰ The effect of the subsidy system was immediate, particularly in the 1960s. The number of production firms and films had increased significantly. For example, one film was released in 1956/57, whereas 14 local motion pictures were distributed in 1970/71.²¹ In 1970 South Africa had over 20 local film producers, whilst 35 films, produced by 15 firms, qualified for subsidisation during 1967-1970.²²

Table 4: Total Production Cost, Total Gross Box Office Revenue and Total Subsidy Received by 35 Subsidised Films, (1967-1970)²³		
	R	Value on 29 July 2016 *R
Total Production Cost	5 398 857	346 947 600
Gross Box Office Revenue	8 496 373	546 003 760
Subsidy Received	3 228 794	207 492 499

¹⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Minutes:

“Interdepartementele Komitee In Sake Hulp Aan Die Plaaslike Filmbedryf”, 1968, p. 174.

¹⁶ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 41.

¹⁷ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R 2,4 million.

¹⁸ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R 3,9 million.

¹⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Memorandum:

“Memorandum insake rolprentsubsidie voorgelê deur Jamie Uys”, (n.d.), p. 1.

²⁰ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 41

²¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: “Voorgestelde wysigings van die subsideskema vir plaaslike vervaardigde rolprente”, 7 October 1971, p.2.

²² 39 Films were produced in total. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: “Voorgestelde wysigings van die subsideskema vir plaaslike vervaardigde rolprente”, 7 October 1971, p. 3.

²³ *Ibid.*

However, subsidisation attracted individuals who exploited the system in an attempt to generate immediate financial gains rather than to contribute to the long-term commercial and artistic expansion of the Afrikaans cinematic industry. Or as the prominent Afrikaans producer and actor, Franz Marx, put it: subsidisation was “a mechanism for a *quick-buck*”.²⁴ As a result, most of the Afrikaans films produced were of a sub-standard quality compared to imported foreign films. The Treasury and Department of Trade and Industries were subsequently forced to continuously amend the scheme throughout the period 1956-1970. In short, they attempted to rid the industry of sub-standard films and reward productions of a higher quality, thus simultaneously enhancing quantity and quality. Subsidisation meant that local Afrikaans film production companies/figures were given prominence, apart from AFP (Killarney Films Studios), which was later incorporated into Satbel. These Afrikaans film production companies/figures included *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies Ltd* (later *Kavalier Films Ltd*²⁵), Mimosa Films Ltd, Jans Rautenbach and Emil Nofal. Below are two illustrations of the abovementioned companies’ income and expenditure from 1967-1970:

Table 5: Production Costs and Income of Films Released between 1967-1970 of Five Companies)²⁶			
Company	Number of Films	Total Production Cost *R	Gross Box Office Revenue *R
<i>Kavalier Films</i>	10	1 920 722	3 351 092
Killarney Films	6	929 587	1 210 998
Jans Rautenbach	1	192 000	142 566
Mimosa Films	2	466 572	917 208
Emil Nofal Films	3	735 813	1 471 691
Total	22	4 244 694	7 093 555

²⁴ Franz Marx, interview by Coenraad J. Coetzee, Stellenbosch University, April 15, 2015.

²⁵ *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* would become *Kavalier Films* in 1966, when Jamie Uys retired and established Mimosa Films.

²⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1. Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: “Staatshulp aan die rolprentbedryf”, 23 March 1972, p. 16.

Table 6: Production Costs and Income of Films Released between 1967-1970 of Five Companies²⁷				
Company	Subsidy Received *R	Provided by Distributors *R	Total Revenue *R	Subsidy as Percentage of Total Revenue %
<i>Kavalier Films</i>	1 374 689	837 774	2 212 463	62
Killarney Films	411 571	302 750	714 321	58
Jans Rautenbach	53 054	35 642	88 696	60
Mimosa Films	427 188	229 303	656 491	65
Emil Nofal Films	595 888	367 923	963 811	62
Total	2 862 390	1 773 392	4 635 782	Average = 61%

Martin Botha has argued that some Afrikaans film productions lacked an aesthetic quality because of the prevailing conservative attitudes:

“This idealistic conservatism was characterised by an attachment to the (pastoral) past, to ideals of linguistic and racial purity and to religious and moral norms. The films had to subscribe to these conservative expectations in order to be successful at the box office.”²⁸

The conservative expectations were embedded in the principles of the South African government (as manifested in the Publications Control Board) and in social values of the local market, as will be expanded upon later. Musicals (*Hoor My Lied* [1967]), adventure stories (*Krugermiljoene* [1967]), comedies (*Oupa for Sale* [1968]) and war stories (*Majuba* [1968]) were most popular in the local market.²⁹ Afrikaans film productions were mainly distributed to independent cinemas or on the circuits of Ster Theatres, an Afrikaans distribution and exhibition company. However, as indicated in Chapter One, the majority of South Africa’s network was controlled by Twentieth-Century-Fox. From 1956-1969 Twentieth-Century-Fox

²⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1. Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: “Staatshulp aan die rolprentbedryf”, 23 March 1972, p. 16.

²⁸ Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1896-2010*, (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 51.

²⁹ Andre le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 60.

selected films based on their perceived financial merits, thus making Afrikaans film production an arduous undertaking, as these films had to compete with foreign films. However, the distribution network would be localised in 1969.³⁰

Subsidy Formula (1956-1970)

Feature films released on or after 1 April 1956 were eligible for government assistance. Only 35 mm films were considered. The scheme took the form of a refund of entertainment tax accumulated during the exhibition of such productions (approximately 22% of the box office revenue).³¹ Calculations were based on gross box office receipts. The refundable amount would not exceed R20 000³² or 50% of the production expenses, whichever was lowest.³³ Only South African production companies qualified for subsidisation, i.e. they must have been regarded a resident in the Union for tax income purposes. Seventy-five percent of the salary and wage expenditure must have been allocated to South African citizens (directors, technicians, etc.).³⁴

To prevent the production of low-quality films, the Department of Trade and Industries made several changes to the subsidisation scheme in 1962. The first R10 000³⁵ received (entertainment tax) for a film would not be eligible for a pay-out. However, if a production received between R10 000 and R12 500, then the full amount (100%) was paid back to the firm. Furthermore, a company would be liable to obtain a 200% refund of entertainment tax if the figure of R12 500³⁶ was exceeded.³⁷ The maximum subsidy payable was amended as follows: 50% of a film's production expenditure, if costs did not exceed R45 000,³⁸ whilst R22 500 was subtracted from the production costs if film expenditure exceeded R45 000³⁹ ($[x > R45\ 000] - R22\ 500$).⁴⁰ Since 1963 16 mm films converted to 35 mm were also included for subsidisation

³⁰ Sanlam and the Schlesinger Organisation acquired Twentieth-Century-Fox's shares in 1969.

³¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2.1, Minutes: "Interdepartementele Komitee In Sake Hulp Aan Die Plaaslike Filmbedryf", 1968, p. 173.

³² Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R1, 6 million.

³³ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 2, Press Statement: "Subsidisation", 30 August 1957, p. 1.

³⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Circular: "Die Minister se Dossier – Die rolprentbedryf", 15 July 1968, p. 109.

³⁵ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R800 000.

³⁶ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R1, 01 million.

³⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: "Voorgestelde wysigings van die subsidieskema vir plaaslike vervaardigde rolprente", 7 October 1971, p. 1.

³⁸ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R3, 66 million.

³⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Circular: "Die Minister se Dossier – Die rolprentbedryf", 15 July 1968, p. 111.

⁴⁰ "X" refers to production costs.

purposes.⁴¹ The concession was made as the government maintained that these films were not necessarily of a lower technical and artistic quality.

The following amendments applied from 1 July 1964. The changes were brought to effect after the provincial entertainment tax regulations of the Cape and Natal had been lowered, and it was evident that too many production firms still misused the scheme and hence the intention was to enhance the quality of films produced by the industry. Subsidisation would be calculated as a percentage of the total gross box office earnings rather than the amount of entertainment tax received by the respective provinces.⁴² A production was not eligible for subsidy payments for the first R50 000⁴³ grossed within a threshold of four years. Forty-four percent of the amount exceeding R50 000 would be received by the producer.⁴⁴ The maximum subsidy limit remained unaltered from what it was in 1962. The condition that 75% of wages and salaries should be allocated to South African citizens was revised as follows: if a company utilises a major foreign personality (actor, director, etc.), the expenditure allocated to this person must be subtracted from the total production costs before a film could become eligible for subsidisation. Seventy-five percent of the remaining salary and wage expenditure had to be paid to South African citizens. The same procedure applied if two major foreign personalities were employed; however, in that case 80% of salaries and wages had to be allocated to local citizens.⁴⁵

On 13 February 1968 the Department of Trade and Industry abolished the maximum subsidy limit. Government maintained that “even the most knowledgeable foreign producers experience unexpected failures”⁴⁶ and the abolition “would provide producers with an opportunity to receive a larger subsidy on quality films and, as such, should help recover losses made by sub-standard films.”⁴⁷ Furthermore, films that generate an income four years after their original release were no longer considered for subsidisation. This period, applying from 14 August 1968, was introduced since rereleases absorbed funds at the expense of new

⁴¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2.1, Minutes:

“Interdepartementele Komitee In Sake Hulp Aan Die Plaaslike Filmbedryf”, 1968, p. 173.

⁴² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Memorandum:

“Memorandum insake rolprentsubsidie voorgelê deur Jamie Uys”, (n.d.), p. 1.

⁴³ Value in 2016 considering inflation: R4, 07 million

⁴⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: “Voorgestelde wysigings van die subsideskema vir plaaslike vervaardigde rolprente”, 7 October 1971, p. 3

⁴⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2. 1, Minutes:

“Interdepartementele Komitee In Sake Hulp Aan Die Plaaslike Filmbedryf”, 1968, p. 172.

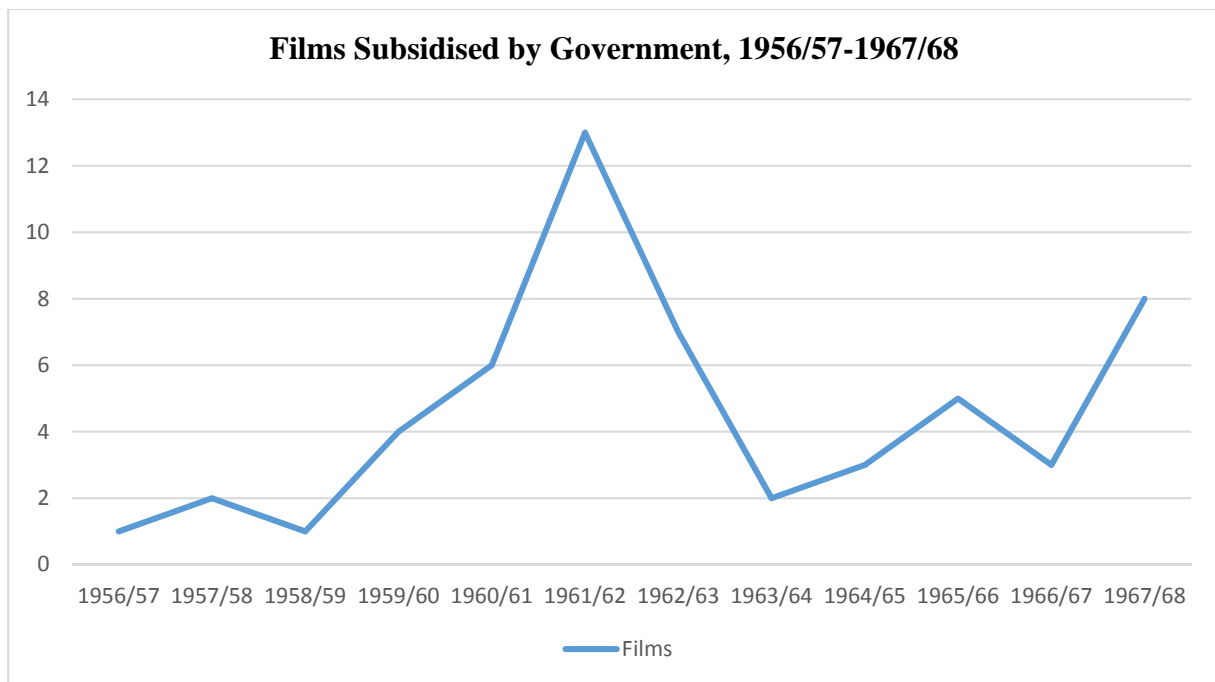
⁴⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: “Voorgestelde wysigings van die subsideskema vir plaaslike vervaardigde rolprente”, 7 October 1971, p. 3.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

productions. Table 7 illustrates the number of films subsidised from 1957/58 to 1967/68, as well as the annual average production cost and subsidy paid.

Table 7: Government's Financial Assistance, 1956/57-1967/68⁴⁸			
Fiscal Year	Number of Films	Average Production Cost *R	Total Subsidy Paid *R
1956/57	1	50 616	6 379
1957/58	2	34 263	15 313
1958/59	1	41 720	38 927
1959/60	4	30 767	32 222
1960/61	6	37 730	88 911
1961/62	13	36 884	102 494
1962/63	7	51 058	174 556
1963/64	2	130 221	213 176
1964/65	3	201 172	284 728
1965/66	5	139 628	333 751
1966/67	3	154 352	269 447
1967/68	8	149 640	399 916
Total	55	88 170, 92 (AVE)	1 959 820

⁴⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Circular: "Die Minister se Dossier- Die rolprentbedryf", 15 July 1968, p. 108.



In 1969 the Minister of Economic Affairs, Jan Haak, announced additional amendments to the subsidisation scheme. Previously films with an Afrikaans and English or bilingual soundtrack qualified for an equal subsidy rate. The government, supported by the MPPA, argued that the composition of the market consequently meant that films with an Afrikaans soundtrack could not compete with those of an English and/or bilingual soundtrack. The Department of Trade and Industries therefore increased the subsidy rate from 44% to 55% (gross box office revenue) for films with an Afrikaans soundtrack.⁴⁹ At least 95% of the dialogue had to be in Afrikaans in order to qualify for the higher rate. The subsidy rate for films in English remained unchanged. The new subsidy rate applied from 1 October 1969.

Socio-cultural Value of the Afrikaans Film

Apart from contributing to the expansion of the Afrikaans film industry, state intervention was correspondingly encouraged because of the socio-cultural value of a film. In a study for government conducted by P.J. Fourie, he identified four basic functions of the communication medium, namely entertainment and recreation, socialization and orientation, education and influence, and artistry.⁵⁰ Cinema was utilised to promote the Afrikaans language and culture, to encourage and consolidate Afrikaner nationalism, at the very time that external hostility

⁴⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 4, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Press Statement: "Persvrystelling", 2 October 1969, p. 1.

⁵⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Summarised study conducted by P.J. Fourie (Department of Communication Studies; University of South Africa) : "Die Sosio-kulturele waarde van die Suid-Afrikaanse speelfilm", (n.d.), p. 1.

towards apartheid was intensifying and film could consequently be used to influence foreign viewers.⁵¹ Fourie argued that media, such as the press, propagated by means of information. What distinguished film was that influence was generated through recreation. Furthermore, Fourie perceived film as the primary institution of entertainment that provided the viewer with an opportunity to momentarily escape from his or her personal domain. Additionally, cinema entertains an individual outside his or her household, meaning that “the collective form of recreation undeniably satisfies the urgent needs of an industrialised, urbanised society.”⁵²

The government was aware that the film is a visual expression of behavioural models, providing information regarding the value systems of a production company, whilst establishing ideals with which the viewer can identify. P.J. Fourie argues that groups of a “lower socio-economic and educational background can commit to a new lifestyle and endeavour to pursue the value systems of a higher educational, economic and social class.”⁵³ As will be illustrated in the subsections, *Debbie* and *Hoor My Lied*, Afrikaans films reflected an idealistic perception of Afrikaner society. The viewer perceives the realities represented through the lens of the film-makers, thus manipulating the observations of the consumer. Fourie’s report, drawing inferences from the effects of Nazi propaganda,⁵⁴ suggested that individuals would rather identify with fictional films than institutionalised state propaganda, documentaries and educational films.⁵⁵

Simply stated, propaganda can be defined as information, expressions or opinions of a subjective or misleading nature, utilised to promote a political cause or perception. Questions often arise regarding the degree of influence projected by motion pictures. The impact depends on the social, political and economic context of the period, which creates the circumstances for the vulnerability of the general public. In short, the more vulnerable a society, the more likely a film is to have an influence, as demonstrated by the infamous German propaganda film *The Triumph of the Will* (1935). Leo C. Rosten argues that the “situation” in which the viewer

⁵¹ This will be considered further in the films discussed later in this study.

SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: “Staatshulp aan die Rolprentbedryf”, 24 May 1972, p. 9.

⁵² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Summarised study conducted by P.J. Fourie (Department of Communication Studies; University of South Africa) : “Die Sosio-kulturele waarde van die Suid-Afrikaanse speelfilm”, (n.d.), p. 3.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵⁴ The titles of the German films were not provided in the source.

⁵⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Summarised study conducted by P.J. Fourie (Department of Communication Studies; University of South Africa): “Die Sosio-kulturele waarde van die Suid-Afrikaanse speelfilm”, (n.d.), p. 6.

“consumes” the product determines the degree of “sensitivity” amongst the public.⁵⁶ The psychological manipulation exercised by a film elicits emotions, occasionally overwhelming rationality. The power of this evocation is embedded in the actors, cinematography and music’s ability to enhance the narrative’s message. Rosten maintains that propaganda is a deliberate attempt to influence mass attitudes and perceptions through the use of symbols rather than force.⁵⁷

The Publications Control Board

Film censorship was utilised by the South African government as a means to ensure the continued existence of the socio-political status quo. As indicated, the government demanded that local and imported films reflect “traditional cultural and moral values.”⁵⁸ The Entertainment Act of 1931 stipulated that local films required censorship clearance before local exhibition. From 1931 to 1962, censorship was mostly applied to foreign films as South African producers rarely contravened the regulations of the Act.⁵⁹ The Publications and Entertainments Act, No. 26 of 1963 formalised the provision that locally produced films had to be approved for screening by the Publications Control Board (PCB).⁶⁰ Sub-article 10, paragraph c of the Act declared that the PCB must reject the exhibition of a production if a film provides a belligerent/offensive representation of the religious convictions of any racial or cultural community, or propagates the promotion of communism (as defined in the Suppression of Communism Act, No. 44 of 1950).⁶¹ Furthermore, sub-article 10, paragraph c stated that rejection became a formality if a film provides an offensive representation of the Prime Minister/State President, polemical or international politics, public figures, scenes of violence involving whites and non-whites, death, alcohol and drug misuse, love scenes, violence against women and children, and racial mixing between whites and non-whites.⁶² An appeal against the Board’s decision had to be directed to the Minister of Internal Affairs within 30 days of the

⁵⁶ Leo C. Rosten, “Movies and Propaganda”, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 254 (1947), p. 117.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁵⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 4, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Correspondence between the Secretary of Internal Affairs and the Publications Control Board: “Bevording van die Afrikaanse rolprent”, 14 October 1968, p. 90.

⁵⁹ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 14.

⁶⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 4, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Act No 26 of 1968: “Wet op Publikasies en Vermaaklikheid”, 1968, p. 115-116.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 115-116.

verdict. Subsequently, as was the case with *Debbie* (1965)⁶³ and *Katrina* (1969), the Minister (or a delegated individual) had to investigate and determine the future of the film. The constraints applied by the PCB limited a producer regarding possible subject matter. This conformity to conservative values made Afrikaans films superficial in nature and unappealing to viewers who did not espouse the nationalistic ideologies of state. *SA Film Weekly*, a journal clearly opposed to the implementation of censorship, went as far as to state that the PCB “raped” the film industry.⁶⁴

***Katrina* (1969)**

In 1969 Emil Nofal Films released the then controversial film, *Katrina*, based on Basil Warner’s play *Try for White*. The production was directed by Jans Rautenbach, whom wrote the script with Emil Nofal. The story is of a white pastor, Alex Trewellyn (Joe Stewardson), who falls in love with a famous singer Katrina September (Jill Kirkland), unaware of the fact that she is a coloured woman “trying for white”. The reason is that Katrina looked and lived as a white woman posing as Catherine Winters. Meanwhile, Paul September (Carel Trichardt), Katrina’s son, becomes romantically involved with a young Afrikaner girl, Alida Brink (Katinka Heyns). The total production expenditure of *Katrina* amounted to R300 000⁶⁵ and it grossed over R900 000,⁶⁶ whilst employing 35 people.⁶⁷ Before production was completed, however, media statements made by Emil Nofal and Jans Rautenbach regarding the content of the film were noted by the government. Nofal and Rautenbach had already faced government criticism for films such as *Die Kandidaat* (1968), a film which was a thinly veiled critique of the Broederbond. In an interview Emil Nofal commented on *Katrina*:

“But as in our previous picture, *Die Kandidaat*, we approached an important point of struggle in our society with honesty. The director, Jans Rautenbach, and I only tried to provide a true reflection of [South African] life”.⁶⁸

⁶³ Will be used during the *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies/Kavalier Films* case study.

⁶⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 11, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, *SA Film Weekly* (Vol. 10, No 4): “Critics refuse to judge”, 27 January 1972, p. 1.

⁶⁵ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R 19,2 million.

SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 4, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Newspaper Article (Not specified): “Katrina kan S.A. se groot rolprent word”, 6 March 1969, p. 212.

⁶⁶ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*. (London: Routledge, 1989), 41

⁶⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 4, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Newspaper Article (Not specified): “Katrina kan S.A. se groot rolprent word”, 6 March 1969, p. 212.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*.

Before production was completed, the PCB and the Minister of Internal Affairs, S.L. Muller, and Minister of Economic Affairs, J.F.W. Haak, requested *Katrina's* script. S.L. Muller argued that the proposed film must be labelled as “political dynamite” as the dialogue contains resentful remarks aimed at the racial dispensation of South Africa.⁶⁹ The PCB’s investigation of a production was atypical, since censorship clearance or rejection usually occurred after a film’s completion. Notwithstanding this, the PCB demanded an alternative ending to the film. Initially, Nofal and Rautenbach intended *Katrina* to conclude with the characters emigrating to a foreign country. Upon the request of the PCB, however, Emil Nofal Films was forced to provide an alternative ending, one that cannot be “misused as distasteful propaganda.”⁷⁰ Ultimately, Father Trewellyn rejects Katrina because of their ethnic and social differences, and she commits suicide. The PCB had ultimately succeeded.



Illustration 2: Image of Jill Kirkland, who played the title role in *Katrina*.⁷¹

Market

Before the advent and establishment of local TV services in the 1970s, Afrikaans producers’ target market consisted primarily of Afrikaners, whilst including white English-speaking South Africans and the international market to a lesser extent (the Black market [for “Bantu films”] was penetrated after the institution of the “B-scheme”).⁷² The country’s white population’s appreciation of entertainment, coupled with the socio-economic upliftment of Afrikaners, created a demand for an Afrikaans film industry. However, the white population consisted of only 3.6 million citizens, including English-speaking South Africans. The heterogeneity of the

⁶⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 4, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Correspondence between S.L. Muller and J.F.W. Haak: “Rolprentsubsidieskema: Mnre. Emil Nofal Films”, 3 February 1969, p. 133.

⁷⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 4, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Correspondence between J.F.W. Haak and S.L. Muller: “Rolprentsubsidieskema”, 16 January 1969, p. 120.

⁷¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 4, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Newspaper Article (Not specified): “Katrina kan S.A. se groot rolprent word”, 6 March 1969, p. 212.

⁷² Films developed for the black market will be discussed in a later chapter.

local and international market produced complications regarding the development of films. Furthermore, each group could be separated according to tastes and preferences. The industry tried to satisfy the lowest common denominator of the market with the provision of entertainment aimed at the whole household, better described as “*Gesinsvriendelikheid*”.⁷³ Studies conducted by Ster Adfilms and Market Research Africa (Pty) Ltd calculated the potential market, created by the entire white local population including the Afrikaner, to be 2 million and 1.1 million respectively. The market was valued at R550 000 for a single production in 1970.⁷⁴ According to *Kavalier Films Ltd*, a motion picture had to attract at least 1 million people to guarantee successful box-office revenue.⁷⁵ As such, producers were effectively reluctant to develop films that did not reflect the prevailing conservative strategy. As stated by Kavaliers: “One or two experiments can result in the collapse of a company and three or four unsuccessful experiments can lead to the decline of an entire industry. Our [Afrikaner] industry therefore cannot afford experimentation.”⁷⁶

The South African government maintained that the local market did not necessarily value a film according to its artistic merit. Some local producers regarded the so-called ‘art film’ as too intellectually complex for the general market.⁷⁷ South African audiences – particularly the Afrikaner – demanded that local motion pictures must reflect a certain level of conservatism. Prolific Afrikaans film director/producer Andre Scholtz⁷⁸ maintained: “Developing films with ‘controversial’ topics was never a problem for me, since these risky scenes weren’t popular amongst the Afrikaans viewer”.⁷⁹ This conservative conformity obstructed the development of Afrikaans film as an art and communication medium.

The cinema of apartheid would produce a handful of locally developed films aimed at the international market in which some productions – though exceedingly rare – managed to generate a profitable turnover (*Hear My Song/Hoor My Lied* (1967), for example). Both

⁷³ “Family-friendly” films. GLD, HBT collection, 191 KAV.7.v.4.(4) Memorandums: “Memo-Debbie”, 20 May 1965, p. 1.

⁷⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Report No. 1330 (Board of Trade and Industries): “Ondersoek na die rolprentbedryf”, 20 July 1970, p. 5.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ GLD, HBT collection, KAV.1.4.8 Agendas: “Memorandum: Byeenkoms oor die bespreking van verhale en draaiboekke”, 21 August 1967, p. 2.

⁷⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Summarised study conducted by P.J. Fourie (Department of Communication Studies; University of South Africa): “Die Sosio-kulturele waarde van die Suid-Afrikaanse speelfilm”, (n.d.), p. 6.

⁷⁸ Producer of *You Must Be Joking!* [1986], *Sweet and Short* [1991] and *’n Paw-Paw vir my Darling* [2015] to name but a few.

⁷⁹ André Scholtz, e-mail message to Coenraad J. Coetzee, June 13, 2016.

government and the larger production firms realised that the size of the external market would provide an opportunity to further expand the local industry. Figures indicate that in 1964 South Africa's annual cinema attendance was around 50 million, whilst annual attendance in England, for example, was approximately three times that.⁸⁰ The Hollywood market consisted of some 3 billion individuals.⁸¹ Government and local firms however, would not be as naïve as to consider that South African pictures could generate the same levels of profits obtained by American producers. Boet Troskie (Mimosa Films) stated in 1988 that this could be attributed to a lack of finance and consequently the quality of a film, publicity, marketing and employment of renowned international actors.⁸² Nonetheless, local production, if managed correctly, could penetrate foreign markets. Afrikaans film producers exploited the government's agenda to promote South Africa's political policies in an endeavour to counter foreign antipathy. Adapting to the needs of government would enhance the relationship between state and producer, thus sustaining financial support. In 1964 *Kavalier Films* maintained that the motion picture was one of the most powerful instruments to promote the "true, yet concealed" image of South Africa.⁸³

Foreign Competition and Participation in Production

The United Kingdom and in particular the United States of America provided the most serious competition for Afrikaans film producers, considering the small South African market, the fact that admission tickets for local and international films were equally priced and the massive budgets and often high quality of foreign films. Figures suggest a definite market for foreign productions when referencing the number of films imported between 1966 and 1971. The PCB approved 608, 600 and 576 films for distribution in 1967, 1968 and 1969 respectively.⁸⁴ An average of approximately 600 productions were required to fulfil the demands of the South African market. During this period (1967-1969) South African filmmakers managed to produce only 24 films.⁸⁵ In other words, local producers obtained only 1,3% of the total market share.

⁸⁰ GLD, HB Thom collection (HBT), 191 KAV.7v.1.(3/2) Memorandums: "Inligting i.s. die rolprentbedryf", 11 March 1964, p.1

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 10, Summit of the State President, P.W. Botha, with the Film Industry (Tuynhuis, Cape Town): "Toespraak gelewer deur Boet Troskie in verband met die bemaking en verspreiding van rolprente", 30 March 1988, p. 3.

⁸³ GLD, HB Thom collection (HBT), 191 KAV.7v.1.(3/2) Memorandums: "Inligting i.s. die rolprentbedryf", 11 March 1964, p.1.

⁸⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Report No. 1330 (Board of Trade and Industries): "Ondersoek na die rolprentbedryf", 20 July 1970, p. 5.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Kavalier Films estimated that foreign production, distribution and exhibition companies accumulated an average annual revenue of approximately R10 000 000⁸⁶ in South Africa during the 1960s.⁸⁷

Despite the introduction and adaptation of the subsidy scheme, foreign participation in South African film production failed to meet expectations.⁸⁸ The lack of cooperation was a source of great concern for the South African government. Most local producers, including Mimosa Films and *Kavalier Films*, maintained that collaborations were essential for the advancement of the industry:

“Cooperation between South Africa and foreign film producers requires encouragement as it’s the fastest and best method to obtain the necessary experience regarding film production”.⁸⁹

Apart from the accumulation of experience, such cooperation also offered the necessary and natural impetus to expand film facilities and artistic talent In South Africa. However, most significantly, the assistance by foreign producers would have made the access to the international market much easier. This lack of cooperation therefore requires some explanation.

The natural scenery and cheaper working conditions (including taxation) in South Africa attracted foreign producers. Research conducted by the Department of Trade and Industries in 1970 (Report No. 1330) indicated that local producers maintained that foreign filmmakers should only be permitted to film in South Africa if they collaborated with the country’s producers or employ local technicians and/or actors. Cooperation, however, was dampened by local producers’ lack of capital. The production expenses of foreign – particularly Hollywood – producers far exceeded the available budgets of local filmmakers. Additionally, requests for subsidy pay-outs would become invalid, since collaboration did not comply with the requirements of the scheme. In 1970 Ster Theatres and the Kinekor Group,⁹⁰ which supported cooperation, maintained that foreign producers would be encouraged to engage in collaborations if adjustments were made to the scheme. The distributors maintained that the

⁸⁶ R 718 235 294,12 taking inflation into consideration.

⁸⁷ GLD, HBT collection, 191 KAV. 4. (1/7) Annual Reports: “Voorsittersredes”, (n.d.), p. 4.

⁸⁸ At its peak during the 1960s only 20% of films developed in South Africa were collaborations with foreign producers. Examples include: *The Hellions* (1961), *Sanders of the River* (1964), *Table Bay* (1964) and *Mozambique* (1966).

⁸⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Report No. 1330 (Board of Trade and Industries): “Ondersoek na die rolprentbedryf”, 20 July 1970, p. 8.

⁹⁰ Originally Twentieth-Century-Fox before the company sold its shares.

formula (which was based on gross box-office receipts) should be replaced to read net box-office revenue/earnings.⁹¹

The “Verafikanisering” of the South African Exhibition and Distribution Network

At the beginning of the 1960s South Africa’s distribution and exhibition network was virtually in foreign control, with Twentieth-Century-Fox managing three-quarters of the market share. Afrikaans productions, averaging approximately four a year between 1956 and 1964, were rare, despite Afrikaners’ increased financial wealth and consequent theatre attendance (a weekly figure of an estimated 750 000 Afrikaners).⁹² By 1965 South Africa had 481 cinemas (including drive-ins [72]);⁹³ cinemas attracted a monthly audience of approximately 4 450 000 people; South Africa imported an average of 400 films a year; persons between the ages of 16 to 28 years were the most avid cinema attenders; and Afrikaans films constituted roughly two percent of all films displayed locally.⁹⁴ A census of “Motion Picture Theatres” initiated by the Department of Industries determined that the monetary value of exhibitors’ properties and equipment was calculated at R12 million, whilst cinemas provided job opportunities for approximately 6 000 people.⁹⁵ The lack of Afrikaans films was a source of concern for cultural bodies such as the *Genootskap vir die Handhawing van Afrikaans* (GHA),⁹⁶ which argued that the “surplus of liberal foreign films” threatened the “special, exceptional traditions and morals” of the Afrikaner.⁹⁷ Excluding-Twentieth Century-Fox, 14 firms distributed imported and local films – one of these was to become South Africa’s paramount distributor by the end of the 1960s.

⁹¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Report No. 1330 (Board of Trade and Industries): “Ondersoek na die rolprentbedryf”, 20 July 1970, p. 9.

⁹² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 7, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 4, Genootskap vir die Handhawing van Afrikaans’ Annual meeting: “Presentation made by J.W. Albie”, 23 February 1973, p. 2.

⁹³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Report No. 1330 (Board of Trade and Industries): “Ondersoek na die rolprentbedryf”, 20 July 1970, p. 3.

⁹⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Correspondence between the Genootskap vir die Handhawing van Afrikaans and the Minister of Internal Affairs: “Facts of the South African film industry”, 15 May 1968, p. 154.

⁹⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 1, Report No 04-51-01: “Census of Cinemas, Café Bioscopes and Drive-in Theatres, 1964-1965, December 1969, p. 11.

⁹⁶ Society for the Preservation of Afrikaans.

⁹⁷ Like the Israelites in the Old Testament and stemming from a fundamentalist form of Calvinism, many Afrikaner nationalists perceived themselves as a chosen people selected by God. André du Toit, “No Chosen People: The Myth of the Calvinist Origins of Afrikaner Nationalism and Racial Ideology”, *The American Historical Review* 88 (1983), p. 920.

SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 7, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 4, Genootskap vir die Handhawing van Afrikaans’ Annual meeting: “Presentation made by J.W. Albie”, 23 February 1973, p. 1.

When Twentieth-Century-Fox acquired ACT's film interests in 1956 – consequently monopolising the industry – a group of Afrikaners, including André Pieterse,⁹⁸ established a local exhibition company. *Inrybelange (Pty) Ltd* was founded and built its first drive-in theatre in 1957.⁹⁹ Within a period of four years Inrybelange introduced four drive-in theatres as well as a conventional cinema. As previously mentioned, Inrybelange reached an agreement with *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* to distribute and exhibit the latter's productions. To ensure financial gains, Inrybelange also negotiated the importation of foreign films. In 1960-61 financial obligations, coupled with intense competition from Twentieth-Century-Fox, halted the expansion of the newly founded distributor. Sanlam's *Die Fakkel* stated: "But suddenly it looked like the company [*Inrybelange*] had indeed succumbed to foreign interests as there was no more money left".¹⁰⁰ During *Inrybelange's* period of financial turmoil, the insurance giant Sanlam already had interests in the local cinematic industry through an investment in *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies*. In 1962 Sanlam assumed control of *Inrybelange* after acquiring the distributor's shares and completing negotiations with other shareholders. Apart from commercial advantages, the reasons for Sanlam's procurement of *Inrybelange* were twofold: to avoid a local business submitting to foreign interests and to intensify its contribution in the industry's advancement. Rationalisation followed and Ster Theatres (Pty) Ltd, an exhibitor, and Ster Films (Pty) Ltd, which distributed films between its theatres, were registered.¹⁰¹

Though Ster Theatres acted as the largest distributor and exhibitor of local Afrikaans films, Sanlam's entry into the cinematic industry was not without difficulties. In 1965 the Minister of Public Works P.W. Botha introduced a policy that strictly regulated the building of cinemas. The Ster Organisation was on the threshold of collapse, as it could not obtain quality foreign productions. The supply produced by local producers was far too small to meet the public demand. The largest American producers such as Paramount were reluctant to grant Ster Theatres the distribution rights of their films, since Ster's indoor cinemas offered "too few seats for their pictures."¹⁰² Although the Ster Theatres circuit consisted of numerous drive-in theatres,

⁹⁸ Pieterse, a pioneer in the South African distribution industry, would later become the Executive Vice-President of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer International Inc., Executive Vice President of Columbia Theatres, Inc. and founder of Ma-Afrika Films (Pty) Ltd. More information on Pieterse will be provided in Chapters 4 and 5.

⁹⁹ It was known as the Wonderboom Drive-in Theatre in Pretoria. Sanlam Archives (SA), documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, *Die Fakkel*, "Rolprentwese in Suid-Afrika", August 1970, p. 14.

¹⁰⁰ Sanlam Archives (SA), documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, *Die Fakkel*, "Rolprentwese in Suid-Afrika", August 1970, p. 14.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.14-15. Referenced as Ster Theatres from this point.

¹⁰² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Memorandum: "Voorgenome ontwikkelingsplan: Bioskoopondernemings", 9 January 1970, p. 1.

American producers still declined contract negotiations, since the filmmakers refused to use drive-in theatres as a criterion. The local distributor was in dire need of assistance and as such directly approached the Department of Community Development to initiate talks on the possibility of property/cinema expansion. In 1966 the Minister of Community Development W.A. Maree, who sympathised with the local distributor, approved Ster Theatres' proposed circuit development.¹⁰³ This led to the building of the prominent 'Sterland' complexes in Johannesburg and Pretoria. Sanlam, acting as the controlling shareholder, oversaw the large-scale development of cinema properties in other areas such as Durban and Cape Town. Ster Theatres, after the successful procurement of government support, became Twentieth-Century-Fox's largest local distribution competitor. By 1967 Ster Theatres' exhibition circuit consisted of 30 cinemas, whilst films were also distributed to independent cinema owners.¹⁰⁴ Sanlam initiated the largest expansion programme ever undertaken by a South African film company. After researching foreign cinematic industries, Sanlam announced the construction of multi-unit cinema complexes (such as Ocean City in Durban). To demonstrate SterTheatres unprecedented development, one only has to note that in 1969 eleven cinemas were opened in a period of ten weeks, including Ster cinemas in Orange Grove and Parow.¹⁰⁵ Sterland, in Johannesburg, housed four theatres, the largest consisting of more than a thousand seats. The immediate expansion resulted in Ster Theatres securing the distribution rights of productions developed by prominent American production companies Columbia Pictures and Paramount. By 1970 Ster Theatres employed 1 300 employees, distributed films to 300 cinemas and owned 20 indoor cinemas and 23 drive-in theatres.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Memorandum: "Voorgenome ontwikkelingsplan: Bioskoopondernemings", 9 January 1970, p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, *Die Fakkel*, "Rolprentwese in Suid-Afrika", August 1970, p. 15.

¹⁰⁵ Business historian Anton Ehlers vividly recalls his time spent at the Ster cinema in Parow. "I was in Grade Eight [high school]... and I can especially remember two films that I watched: *Paint Your Wagon* (1969) with Lee Marvin and Clint Eastwood as main actors, and *Love Story* [1970] with Ryan O'Neal and Ali MacGraw..." Whilst watching *Love Story* with his mother, aunt and the latter's children, Ehlers states that tissues were handed out in the cinema, since many became emotional. However, the screening of *Paint Your Wagon* was one of his first experiences in which he became aware of Afrikaner class divisions - even within families. "My aunt wanted to sit at the back of the cinema, since the film had too much movement [on the screen]. My mother wanted to sit at the front, as we could not afford the expensive tickets for the seats at the back. We, ultimately, landed [in seats] three throws from the front with my aunt complaining after the film that her neck was stiff from looking up from the front rows." At the time Ehlers' father (carpenter) and his aunt's husband (Assistant Manager: Personnel) both worked at Ster's parent company, Sanlam. Anton Ehlers, e-mail message to Coenraad J. Coetzee, March 6, 2017.

¹⁰⁶ SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, *Die Fakkel*, "Rolprentwese in Suid-Afrika", August 1970, p. 15.

Though John Schlesinger sold the distribution and exhibition interests to Twentieth-Century-Fox in 1956, the Schlesinger organisation still managed a range of businesses in South Africa, including African Film Productions (*African Mirror* and *Ons Nuus*). Twentieth-Century-Fox attempted to acquire AFP in 1959, renaming it South African Screen Productions; however, as a result of the financial failure of the movie *Cleopatra* (1963), which cost the company very dearly, the Schlesinger Organisation regained AFP after a non-payment. Yet Twentieth-Century-Fox still controlled the largest chain of theatres up until 1969, consisting of 110 outlets, of which 22 were drive-ins.¹⁰⁷ On 30 April 1969 an announcement was made that the Sanlam Group and the Schlesinger Organisation had bought the principal interests of Twentieth-Century-Fox in Southern Africa.¹⁰⁸ These interests included all open-air and indoor cinemas, Killarney Film Studios and cinema catering. Twentieth-Century-Fox would be renamed Kinekor Ltd, whilst its shares were divided equally amongst Sanlam and the Schlesinger Organisation. An amount of approximately R34 million was paid for Twentieth-Century-Fox's main interests in South Africa.¹⁰⁹ The combined interest of Ster and Kinekor allowed the new partners, and more importantly South Africans, to obtain control of 76% of the South African distribution network.¹¹⁰ By 1970 Kinekor's organisation comprised of 118 cinemas (including 22 drive-in theatres and 18 café-cinemas), two companies which specialised in film advertisements (Alexander Films and Filmlets) and South Africa's largest distribution network, which imported films from Twentieth-Century-Fox, Warner Bros, Rank, United Artists, Walt Disney, Anglo EMI, Universal Studios, Cinema Centre and Cinerama Incorporated. Other interests included a 50% interest in Irene Film Laboratories (South Africa's only film developer), a 75% share of Chemix (a company that printed most of South Africa's film posters) and a 50% share of Gallo-Fox (a company that provided audio-visual aids for educational purposes).¹¹¹ Ster and Kinekor would jointly own 161 theatres and 100 properties, whilst employing 5 500 people in 1970.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 1, Newspaper Article (*The Star*) written by John Marvin: "Multimillion rand South African deal", 30 April 1969, p. 3.

¹⁰⁸ SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, *Die Fakkkel*, "Rolprentwese in Suid-Afrika", August 1970, p. 17.

¹⁰⁹ R 2,3 billion, taking inflation into account. SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, *Die Fakkkel*, "Sanlam in huge cinema take over", June 1969, p. 3.

¹¹⁰ Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1896-2010*. (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 50.

¹¹¹ SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, *Die Fakkkel*, "Rolprentwese in Suid-Afrika", August 1970, p. 13.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

Consequent upon the take-over of the Twentieth-Century-Fox Organisation of Southern Africa, the Sanlam Group effectively acquired and controlled the largest share of the local cinema industry. Afrikaners finally had the means to manage the industry according to their own financial, cultural and social interests:

“A major reason for the acquisition of the Twentieth-Century-Fox Group was that one of the most important communication media of South Africa was being controlled by a foreign company whose orientation and business policy was not directed in the interests of the cinema industry in this country, but more toward a policy of maximising short term profits of the foreign owners.”¹¹³

Prior to the acquisition, Sanlam already controlled the largest shares of the Ster-Theatres Group. However, Sanlam, as I.W. Schlesinger had argued in the early 20th century, maintained that the cinema industry required immediate transformation.



The big film takeover by RICHARD SMITH

Celebrating this week's big film deal in which the Schlesinger Organisation and Sanlam bought out 20th Century-Fox's interests in Southern Africa for R34-million are, on the screen (from left): Barbara Streisand, Groucho Marx, Elizabeth Taylor, John Wayne and Richard Burton. In front of the screen (from left) are Dr. A. D. Wassenaar, chairman of Sanlam, Mr. John Schlesinger, head of the Schlesinger Organisation, and Mr. Mandy Moross, managing director. Moving off in the background is Darryl F. Zanuck, 20th Century-Fox's boss in the United States.

Illustration 3: Cartoon, by Richard Smith, representing Sanlam and the Schlesinger Organisation's acquisition of Twentieth-Century-Fox's cinematic interests in South Africa.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Memorandum: "Memorandum on the proposed rationalisation of the cinema undertakings controlled by the Sanlam Group through its investments in S.A. Teater Belange (Pty) Ltd and Sanso (Pty) Ltd", December 1969, p. 2.

¹¹⁴ SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, *Die Fakkkel*, "Sanlam in huge cinema take over", June 1969, p. 4.

The framework of rationalisation was established by the institution of two investment holding companies: *Suid-Afrikaanse Teater Belange (Eiendoms) Beperk*¹¹⁵ (Satbel) and Sanso (Proprietary) Ltd (Sanso). Satbel was established to administer the Ster Group and the Kinekor Group, thus functioning as an investment holding company. Sanlam and the Schlesinger Organisation reasoned that Ster and Kinekor, although subsidiaries of Sanlam, must operate as separate and contending organisations “in view of their exhibition commitments under supply contracts with overseas film producers.”¹¹⁶ The Monopolies Act (1955) also prevented a company/organisation from exercising control of a market, product or service.¹¹⁷ Sanso, a property holding company, developed and managed major properties of the group during rationalisation. Satbel, headed by Dr A.D. Wassenaar,¹¹⁸ would be managed by Sanlam, whilst the Schlesinger organisation owned an interest of 30%. Sanso comprised of an equal partnership between Sanlam and the Schlesinger Organisation. M.D. Moross, from Schlesinger, acted as Sanso’s chairman. Rationalisation would prove to be beneficial for both Ster and Kinekor.¹¹⁹



Illustration 4: Dr A.D. Wassenaar (Chairperson of Satbel)¹²⁰

In spite of the tendency towards over-seating in the Republic,¹²¹ the Ster Organisation wished to enlarge its distribution network as Ster possessed a profusion of unreleased productions. The Kinekor Group, which managed an established and widespread circuit, sustained a decline in

¹¹⁵ South African Theatre Interests (Pty) Ltd.

¹¹⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Memorandum: “Memorandum on the proposed rationalisation of the cinema undertakings controlled by the Sanlam Group through its investments in S.A. Teater Belange (Pty) Ltd and Sanso (Pty) Ltd”, December 1969, p. 1.

¹¹⁷ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 159.

¹¹⁸ Wassenaar also acted as the Chairperson and MD of Sanlam. J.P. Scannell, *Uit die Volk Gebore; Sanlam se Eerste Vyftig Jaar*, (Kaapstad, Nasional Boekhandel, 1968), p. 97.

¹¹⁹ SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, *Die Fakkel*, “Sanlam in huge cinema take over”, June 1969, p. 3.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Too many theatres for South Africa’s small white population.

financial growth as a result of over-seating and South African censorship prohibiting the screening of controversial American productions.¹²² Ster Theatres' largest product suppliers, Columbia Pictures and Paramount, encouraged the transformation as they argued that Twentieth-Century-Fox's (Kinekor Group) demands regarding the distribution of their films were inequitable. Furthermore, the popularity of drive-ins, especially amongst Afrikaner households, increased, whilst the conventional four wall cinemas¹²³ were losing their attractiveness. Afrikaners encouraged by the datum that Ster Theatres distributed local Afrikaans productions, which (as demonstrated above) promoted "*Gesinsvriendelike*" entertainment, regarded the drive-in as a family entertainment venue. General over-seating coupled with the growing popularity of drive-in theatres would have motivated Kinekor to close uneconomic cinemas. However, this was prevented as there was a threat of Ster acquiring these premises and jeopardising the Kinekor circuit. Many of the Kinekor theatres located in the large city centres were 30 years old and lacked modern facilities (e.g. air conditioning) and were too large (more than thousand seats), whilst central property was inefficiently managed, leaving the company incapable of paying economic rent.¹²⁴ Lastly, Sanlam and the Schlesinger organisation were cognisant and wary of the increasing likelihood of the introduction of television. Sanlam reasoned that "suitable preparation and reduction of over-seating should be undertaken in advance of the arrival."¹²⁵

Sanso's arranged cinema rationalisation and redevelopment programme had been divided into four distinct stages: immediate redevelopment; short-term rationalisation; pre-television preparation; and post-television rationalisation.¹²⁶ Firstly, the problem of over-seating was addressed and alleviated by the complete removal of outdated and uneconomic central city theatres (e.g. Plaza and Opera House in Pretoria), whilst certain theatres would be replaced by modern cinemas (e.g. Adelphi Theatre in Sea Point). Certain cinemas required redevelopment; however, Sanso halted proceedings to wait for the government's verdict regarding the

¹²² The number of these 'controversial' American productions was increasing.

¹²³ Mayfair Cinema (Johannesburg), for example. Drive-ins mushroomed all over South Africa even in more remote rural areas such as the North West of the Cape Province. The first drive-in in Upington, for example, opened in May 1963. *Die Gembok*, 3 May 1963, "Opening 3 Mei van Kalahari Inryteater" as quoted in Anton Ehlers, "Renier van Rooyen and Pep Stores Limited: The Genesis of a South African Entrepreneur and Retail Empire" *South African Historical Journal* 60 (2008), 435.

¹²⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Correspondence between Sanlam's industry advisor (W.J. de Villiers) and J.F.W. Haak: "Rasionalisasie van die teaterbedryf in Suid-Afrika", 14 January 1970, p. 1.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.* This last point will be expanded upon in the following chapter.

¹²⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Memorandum: "Memorandum on the proposed rationalisation of the cinema undertakings controlled by the Sanlam Group through its investments in S.A. Teater Belange (Pty) Ltd and Sanso (Pty) Ltd", December 1969, p. 5-7.

introduction of television. Stages three and four will be discussed in the following chapters. The distributor/exhibitor and the local Afrikaans film producer benefited from the rationalisation and redevelopment of cinematic properties. A smaller exhibition network would cut the unnecessarily high expenses of the surplus cinemas,¹²⁷ thus ensuring cheaper distribution of local film productions. The rationalisation of local cinemas into modern, but more significantly smaller, theatres meant that a property could accommodate more cinemas and wider range/diversity of films. This allowed more Afrikaans film productions to be selected for distribution and exhibition. Martin Botha argues that “Afrikaner capital, thus, became a significant factor in the film industry when Sanlam acquired this major interest in Ster Films, a distribution company with the explicit intention to provide cinema predominantly for white Afrikaner patrons.”¹²⁸ In an interview conducted with *Die Transvaler* H. de G. Laurie (Sanlam’s general manager of investments and co-director of Satbel) argued that the takeover of the distribution and exhibition industry in South Africa would contribute in the quantity of Afrikaans productions;

“Ster has always maintained a more sympathetic attitude towards the Afrikaans film and public than could be expected from foreign firms... The prospects of the Afrikaans film industry have improved with the amalgamation. Yet ultimately the supply and advancement of the Afrikaans film is dependent on the public’s support and particularly from the demand for films created by the Afrikaner.”¹²⁹



Illustration 5: The Adelphi Theatre in Sea Point in the 1960s¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Wages, maintenance of cinemas etc.

¹²⁸ Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1896-2010*, (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 50.

¹²⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 1, Newspaper Article (*Die Transvaler*): “Rolprentreus vir Suid-Afrika nou op pad”, 1 May 1969, p. 25.

¹³⁰ SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, *Die Fakkkel*, May 1970, Cover page.

Relationship between Afrikaans Producers and Satbel

When considering all the South African distributors and exhibitors, Afrikaans producers were primarily dependent on the Ster Theatres and Kinekor circuits. In 1969 the Department of Trade and Industries, under Minister J.W. Haak, investigated the relationship between producers and distributors/exhibitors in the industry.¹³¹ The department concluded that the relationship sustained was generally salutary for all parties involved as Satbel (Sanlam) wished to contribute to the advancement of local production. Notwithstanding, problem areas were identified with producers – especially the smaller companies – maintaining that South African distribution was monopolistic in nature. P.J. Fourie argued: “The acceptance of a motion picture for exhibition, as well as the place and time of exhibition, is frequently dependent on the opinion of a single individual”.¹³²

The fact that producers were prepared to invest considerable funds in the development of a picture demonstrates that each filmmaker expected his film to be accepted for distribution. Naturally, producers desired their films to receive the finest treatment in terms of release (period and place) and publicity. Regarding the return on capital, filmmakers insisted their product be displayed as soon as production was completed. Prominent producers, such as *Kavalier Films*, *Brigadiers Films* and Emil Nofal, which managed to sustain a healthy flow of productions would not be as alarmed at a delay between completion and exhibition, unlike producers with fewer resources. Dr W.J. de Villiers (Sanlam’s Industrial Advisor) considered Afrikaans producers, who were developing products only for the local market, to be in an exceptional position, as opposed to producers who developed films aimed at local and external markets: “The commencement of their income flow is dependent on the release of the product in this country, whilst foreign films¹³³ are shown locally only after they have been released in other countries.”¹³⁴ Distributors attempted to rectify the problem by making a pre- payment to producers obtained from distribution income.

¹³¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Correspondence between Sanlam and The Department of Trade and Industries with an attached memorandum: “Die Verhouding van Kinekor en Ster met Suid-Afrikaanse Film Produsente”, 15 December 1969, p. 1.

¹³² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Summarised study conducted by P.J. Fourie: “Die Sosio-kulturele waarde van die Suid-Afrikaanse speelfilm”, (n.d.), p. 8.

¹³³ He is referring here to local productions aimed at foreign markets.

¹³⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Correspondence between Sanlam and The Department of Trade and Industries with an attached memorandum: “Die Verhouding van Kinekor en Ster met Suid-Afrikaanse Film Produsente”, 15 December 1969, p. 2.

The main purpose of the exhibitor is to increase the turnover generated by ticket sales. The industry is unique as exhibitors are the only retailers to sell all products according to one fixed price, regardless of quality. "Productions which cost R100 000 are displayed at the same entrance fee as films which cost R1 million or more."¹³⁵ As such, South African exhibitors were meticulous in the management and selection of films, the release dates, the timespan of exhibition and publicity. South African circuits aimed to establish a socio-economic equilibrium as the most profitable Afrikaans films (according to their budgets) were approved. This is one reason why potential non-white producers found it challenging to develop films. The lack of finance made filmmaking an almost impossible task as these productions would not be approved for distribution and/or exhibition. The common goal shared amongst Afrikaans producers, exhibitors and distributors was to increase profits by means of maximising ticket sales. Thus, the commonality of interests ensured cooperation within the white cinematic industry.

Weekly cinema attendance fluctuated according to the time of year. For example, Afrikaans producers, exhibitors and distributors realised that admission sales were highest during the December school holidays and, as such, exploited the market by providing family-friendly entertainment at that time. The product's release date was meticulously selected according to market obtainability. Consequently, the release date of a film was expedited or delayed. Satbel's central city cinemas (in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria and Durban) would host the first exhibitions of only the largest local productions to recoup the costs of the expensive monthly-fixed operative costs. The economic duration of a film's exhibition cycle (as demonstrated in the previous chapter) was monitored according to a predetermined "hold-over" income¹³⁶ – a minimum turnover amount generated within a certain timeframe.¹³⁷ Exceeding the "hold-over" income figure would lengthen the film's period of exhibition ("round"). The quality, type or merits of a film would dictate the production's release pattern in, for example, a drive-in theatre or a central city cinema. Promotion of films (via flyers, press books, magazine

¹³⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 3, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 7, Correspondence addressed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (P. Wolmarans): "Ondersoek na die Suid-Afrikaanse Rolprentverspreidings- en Vertoningsbedryf", 7 April 1981, p. 11.

¹³⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Correspondence between Sanlam and The Department of Trade and Industries with an attached memorandum: "Die Verhouding van Kinekor en Ster met Suid-Afrikaanse Film Produsente", 15 December 1969, p. 3.

¹³⁷ "Hold-over" Income = Operating costs + Film Hire + Pre-established Profit.

articles etc.) needed pre-release publication – usually seven or eight weeks in advance of the releases.¹³⁸

Satbel, a company that monopolised South African exhibition and distribution, albeit through two organisations, based its film-selection criteria on a number of factors: previous experiences/records of box-office revenues generated by *comparable* films; the quality of the product; the quality of other films available during the same timeframe; the content and/or themes of the film correlating with a specific time of year (for example, school holidays and festive seasons); the environment of exhibition (drive-ins, rural areas, city theatres and art theatres); and of course, an estimate of the possible revenue that could be generated by the production.¹³⁹ Producer, Emil Nofal, supported Satbel's selection policies and stated:

“They [Satbel] are also running a business and they have to run it to the best of their ability. If your picture is good it is going to get better distribution than if it is not good. Unfortunately, every filmmaker thinks his picture is the most beautiful baby in the world.”¹⁴⁰

Sanlam reasoned that Satbel (Ster Theatres and Kinekor) had an obligation to distribute and exhibit local films maintaining a high standard (although some South African film historians [e.g. Blignaut en Botha] might argue that the pool of local films available were of a sub-standard quality). The public – and especially the Afrikaner – demand for local productions was substantial and consequently motivated Satbel to establish a salutary relationship with local film producers. However, according to Sanlam, public demand exceeded the supply of locally produced films (maintaining an applicable standard) and stated that the entire industry would collapse if foreign films were not imported: “Nothing would be as catastrophic for the industry if most of the films displayed aren't of a high quality.”¹⁴¹ In 1969, for instance, 254 films were displayed weekly on the Kinekor distribution circuit.¹⁴² In comparison, South African firms managed to produce only seven films in the same year.¹⁴³ Satbel encouraged

¹³⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Correspondence between Sanlam and The Department of Trade and Industries with an attached memorandum: “Die Verhouding van Kinekor en Ster met Suid-Afrikaanse Film Produsente”, 15 December 1969, p. 3.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Summarised study conducted by P.J. Fourie: “Die Sosio-kulturele waarde van die Suid-Afrikaanse speelfilm”, (n.d.), p. 8.

¹⁴¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Correspondence between Sanlam and The Department of Trade and Industries with an attached memorandum: “Die Verhouding van Kinekor en Ster met Suid-Afrikaanse Film Produsente”, 15 December 1969, p. 4.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report No 1753: “Ondersoek na die Rolprentbedryf in Suid-Afrika”, 21 December 1976, p. 5.

Afrikaans film producers to establish relations with foreign producers to increase co-operation and consequently enhance the quantity and quality of South African produced motion pictures.

Overview of *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies Ltd/Kavalier Films Ltd's History (1954-1970)*¹⁴⁴

As mentioned in Chapter One, the climate for local film production was immensely unfavourable when *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* (Jamie Uys Films) was established in 1954. However, the film company managed to sell shares valued at R50 000 (R4,07 million in 2016), allowing the company to operate successfully from 1954 to 1959.¹⁴⁵ The *Nywerheidsontwikkelingskorporasie van SA Bpk*¹⁴⁶ (NOK), founded in 1940 to promote industrial and economic growth, a self-financing institution retained by the state and supervised by the economic development ministry, acquired shares valued at R10 000.¹⁴⁷ The cultural body, *Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge* (FAK), invested R20 000 in the firm.¹⁴⁸ A quote from the FAK's General Secretary, D.J. Viljoen, best summarised the objective of the organisation's involvement:

"In conclusion, we [FAK] whole-heartedly accept the premise that film production is a cultural activity. The Afrikaner has always maintained that culture and the economy, cultural striving and the economic struggle go hand in hand. Therefore, many of our economic institutions were born in the cultural delivery room. It consequently becomes necessary that the assets of the economic institutions must be reinvested in the cultural domain. We regard it as significant that the current Managing Director [T.W.S. Meyer] was the former General Secretary of the FAK. Herein lies a guarantee that the construction of the Afrikaans film industry would not only contribute to the Afrikaans language, but would also showcase the beauty of our land and the majesty of our own history."¹⁴⁹

By 1961 *Jamie Uys Films* produced several successful films (with the support of the subsidisation scheme), such as *Geld Soos Bossies* (1955), *Die Bosvelders* (1958), *Satanskoraal* (1959) and *Rip van Wyk* (1960), thus allowing the company to repay its debt of R16 000.¹⁵⁰ In

¹⁴⁴ Reminder: The History of Jamie Uys Filmproduksies/Kavalier Films –and examples of its films- are discussed as the company was considered a leading Afrikaans cinematic film producer and reflected the state of the Afrikaans cinematic film industry before and after SABC-TV was introduced in 1976.

¹⁴⁵ GLD, HB Thom collection (HBT), 191 KAV. 7V.1 (1) Background of the company: "Huidige Samestelling van Ons Maatskappy: Memorandum aangaande Jamie Uys Filmproduksies Bpk", (n.d.), p. 1.

¹⁴⁶ Industrial Development Corporation (IDC).

¹⁴⁷ R814 000 when taking inflation into account. GLD, HB Thom collection (HBT), 191 KAV. 7V.1 (1), Background of the company: "Huidige Samestelling van Ons Maatskappy: Memorandum aangaande Jamie Uys Filmproduksies Bpk", (n.d.), p. 1.

¹⁴⁸ GLD, HBT, 191. KAV. 4. (1/1), Annual Report: "Voorsittersverslag". 24 February 1962, n.p.

¹⁴⁹ GLD, HBT, 191. KAV. 4. (1/10), Annual Report: "Voorsittersverslag: P.J. Viljoen", (n.d.), p. 1.

¹⁵⁰ R1, 3 million taking inflation into account.

line with the general approach of the production industry in the 1960s, the number of motion pictures produced by *Jamie Uys Films* increased after the affiliated company, Jamie Uys Studios Ltd, was registered on 15 August 1960.¹⁵¹ In 1961 Jamie Uys Films, in collaboration with the British company Warwick Films, produced *The Hellions*.¹⁵² *The Hellions* would become the most expensive production undertaken by *Jamie Uys Films* as costs exceeded R600 000 (R48,8 million in 2016).¹⁵³ Uys then wrote, directed and produced *Doodkry is Min* (1961). Commissioned by the FAK, *Doodkry is Min* is a cultural and historical documentary that celebrated the development of Afrikaans since 1860. The film premiered at the amphitheatre located at the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria on 29 April 1961 and was attended by the State President at the time, C.R. Swart. History was made as an audience consisting of 40 000 people attended the premiere, a world record at the time.¹⁵⁴

In the following year Jamie Uys, together with T.W.S (Tommie) Meyer, successfully convinced Sanlam, Bonuskor,¹⁵⁵ Santam and the *Ekonomiese Instituut* to invest R70 000¹⁵⁶ in Jamie Uys Films.¹⁵⁷ The films produced by the company were generating turnovers that exceeded the company's expectations. The films included *Doodkry is Min* (1961), *Kimberley Jim* (1963) and *Dingaka* (1964). Both *Kimberley Jim* and *Dingaka* were distributed internationally. The board of directors of *Jamie Uys Films* maintained that the company's strategy for maximising turnovers was producing a large number of films in as short a time as possible.¹⁵⁸ Although the method produced unprecedented success for the local producer, the tempo of films produced placed the company's chairperson and founder Jamie Uys under immense pressure. Apart from being the production company's chairperson (responsible for administration and management), Uys also acted as director, scriptwriter, actor and cameraman for most of the films produced. The pressure sustained by Uys increased when directors Jans

¹⁵¹ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV 3. (1/1), Financial Statements: "Eerste Konsep", 10 November 1961, p. 2.

¹⁵² Coenraad J. Coetzee, *Aspekte van die Geskiedenis van Jamie Uys Film Produksies/ Kavalier Films Beperk, c. 1969-1979: Kommersiële Opportuniste of Kultureel/Ideologiese Entrepreneurs?* (Ongepubliseerde Honneurs, Universiteit van Stellenbosch, 2014), p. 7.

¹⁵³ The costs would be divided equally amongst Warwick films and Jamie Uys Films. The latter had never previously produced a film which exceeded R60 000. GLD, HBT, 191. KAV. 4. (1/1), Annual Report: "Voorsittersverslag", 24 February 1962, n.p.

¹⁵⁴ GLD, HBT, 191. KAV. 4. (1/1), Annual Report: "Voorsittersverslag", 24 February 1962, n.p.

¹⁵⁵ Bonus Beleggingskorporasie (Bonuskor), an Afrikaner investment company, managed the investments of policyholders' bonuses in Sanlam. Grietjie Verhoef, "Nationalism and free enterprise in mining: the case of Federale Mynbou 1952-1965", *South African Journal of Economic History* 10 (1995), p. 92.

¹⁵⁶ R5,7 million in 2016.

¹⁵⁷ GLD, HBT, 191. KAV. 4. (1/1), Annual Report: "Voorsittersverslag", 24 February 1962, n.p.

¹⁵⁸ Coenraad J. Coetzee, *Aspekte van die Geskiedenis van Jamie Uys Film Produksies/ Kavalier Films Beperk, c. 1969-1979: Kommersiële Opportuniste of Kultureel/Ideologiese Entrepreneurs?* (Ongepubliseerde Honneurs, Universiteit van Stellenbosch, 2014), p. 7.

Rautenbach and Emil Nofal left *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* to establish their own production companies. Furthermore, Jamie Uys's filmmaking approach differed from that of the rest of the company's management, which limited not only the cost-effectiveness of a film but also its artistic value. Uys argued that a "thorough and intimate"¹⁵⁹ approach would guarantee quality and, consequently, box office successes. In short, he argued that quality supersedes quantity in film production.¹⁶⁰ In May 1966 Jamie Uys announced his resignation as chairperson and director.¹⁶¹ The company, along with its Board of Directors, was reorganised and consisted of Schalk J. Botha (Chairperson),¹⁶² H.A. Louw, M. Muravitz, P.R. Nel (future Mayor of Pretoria), Prof. H.B. Thom, Prof. B van Deventer, Tommie Meyer (Managing Director).¹⁶³ Under new leadership and as its main strategy the company endeavoured to produce at least three films per year.¹⁶⁴

Before his departure, Jamie Uys, along with the rest of management, suggested that the company name, *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies*, should be changed. An "impersonal" brand would eliminate the possibility of confusion around future productions, whilst simultaneously providing the company's directors with an opportunity to better expand their own reputation.¹⁶⁵ Apart from the reorganisation of management, a change in the company's name had other implications such as increased competition with Jamie Uys' new production company, coupled with the loss of the experience, knowledge and popular branding offered by such a prominent filmmaker. Management ultimately decided, as will be seen, that the best means of establishing a new brand with the public was to associate the name of the company with a highly marketed film.

In contrast with the most recently established firms, *Jamie Uys Films* had the capital to invest in extensive production and publicity. On 29 July 1966, during a special meeting held by the board of directors, it was agreed upon that the new production company would be renamed

¹⁵⁹ Mimosafilms, "... sage and screen ... Jamie Uys (1921-1996)". Access 2 July 2016:

<http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/jamie1.aspx>.

¹⁶⁰ Uys's theory would be proven right as will be seen.

¹⁶¹ Coenraad J. Coetzee, *Aspekte van die Geskiedenis van Jamie Uys Film Produksies/ Kavalier Films Beperk, c. 1969-1979: Kommersiële Opportuniste of Kultureel/Ideologiese Entrepreneurs?* (Ongepubliseerde Honneurs, Universiteit van Stellenbosch, 2014), p. 8.

¹⁶² Botha served as a director of over thirty companies (including Santam and Saambou) and was an Afrikaans cultural leader. For example, he acted as the secretary of two organisations endeavouring to promote Afrikaner interests in urbanised areas, i.e. the Johanna Ziervogel and the Pieter Neethlingsfonds. He was also a member of the Broederbond and the F.A.K. C.J. Beyers & J.L. Basson, *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek: Deel V*, (Pretoria: Raad van Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing, 1987), p. 78-79.

¹⁶³ GLD, HBT, 191. KAV. 4. (1/13), Annual Report: "Voorsittersverslag", 30 June 1968, p. 3.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁶⁵ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.5 (3/22), Minutes: "Dagbestuurvergadering", 25 May 1966, p. 1-2.

*Kavalier Filmproduksies Ltd.*¹⁶⁶ The launch of the new name would coincide with the release of a new film with a similar name. *Die Kavaliers* is an adventure film produced in 1966, written by Fanus Rautenbach, Jan Perold, Elmo de Witt, Piet Schreuder and Pierre Fourie; it was directed by Elmo de Witt and filmed by Manie Botha and Louis de Witt. The film is set in the South African War. General Christiaan R. de Wet instructs Boer soldier and *Kavalier* leader, Chris Botha (Leon le Roux), along with a hundred of his best soldiers, to infiltrate and destroy the ammunition held in the British camps. Chris Botha was transferred to the Cape, acting as a spy to explore enemy territory. Ster Theatres distributed *Die Kavaliers*; its first official release was screened at the Voortrekker Monument on 24 September 1966, with the collaboration of the FAK and the *Rapportryers*.¹⁶⁷ *Kavalier Films* would remain the company's name until its dissolution in 1978 as will be explained in the following chapters.



Illustration 6: *Kavalier Films' Logo*¹⁶⁸

Kavalier Films as a Case Study

The existence of *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies/Kavalier Films* (1954-1978) reflected the context of the Afrikaans film producing industry during the apartheid era. The South African government, Afrikaans media, distributors, exhibitors and the public considered *Kavaliers* as an industrial leader. This is understandable, as *Kavaliers* films was responsible for more than

¹⁶⁶ *Kavalier Films* or *Kavaliers*.

¹⁶⁷ The *Federasie van Rapportryerskorps* (Federation of Rapportryers) can trace its roots back to 1949, i.e. the inauguration of the Voortrekker Monument. Each *Rapportryer* (messenger/rider) brought messages of support from a particular region of the country symbolised by the state flag. In the early 1950s the riders held a reunion and the first *korps* (band) was established. The idea became popular with bands established across the country. These bands eventually held a congress in 1961 that led to the establishment of the federation. The federation developed into an organisation aspiring to protect the Afrikaner's national interest, culture, lifestyle and Christianity. Andrew Crampton, "The Voortrekker Monument, the birth of apartheid, and beyond", *Political Geography* 20 (2001), p. 235. Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings, "12 Augustus", Accessed: 6 March 2017: <http://www.afrikanergeskiedenis.co.za/12-augustus/>.

¹⁶⁸ GLD, HBT collection, 191 KAV.1.4.91 Agendas, "Direksievergaderingsnotule", 25 November 1977, Front Page.

40% of all locally produced motion pictures from 1960-1975.¹⁶⁹ Apart from the quantity of films distributed, *Kavaliers* managed to exert direct control over the most important film bodies such as the MPPA or the *Vereniging van Vollengte Rolprentvervaardigers van Suid-Afrika* (discussed in Chapter One).¹⁷⁰ Jamie Uys, acting as co-founder and chairperson, laid the foundations for the financial successes maintained by the company, even after his departure in 1966. The company's endeavour to establish itself as a profitable company in a relatively new industry was balanced with the elevated ambition of "expanding the local cinematic industry."¹⁷¹ The relatively small South African market, coupled with the frequently changing political, social, economic and technological context, made the pursuit of *Kavaliers*' ambitions particularly challenging. However, *Kavaliers*' business, cultural and political network, supported by prominent figures in its management, allowed the exploitation of the filmmaking environment. As the firm's Script committee explained: "We [*Kavalier Films*] are not commercial opportunists; the aim is to expand an industry. We must use our contacts to full effect and not disappoint the confidence placed in the company."¹⁷²

It is necessary to note at this point that, despite the organisation's nationalist inclinations, not all individuals employed by *Kavaliers*, such as Franz Marx, Emil Nofal and Jans Rautenbach, were conservative Afrikaner nationalists. However, the company's most influential figures, such as chairperson, Schalk J. Botha, Tommie Meyer (Managing Director), Ben Vlok (future chairperson) and H.B. Thom, were all members of the Broederbond.¹⁷³ As will be demonstrated, Jamie Uys produced films that incorporated both entertainment value and advanced the socio-political objectives of the state. *Kavaliers*' system of filmmaking, as mentioned, applied enormous pressure on its scriptwriters and directors to complete a film's production. As a result, *Kavaliers* established the *Draaiboekkomitee* (script committee) in 1967. Former Broederbond chairperson (1952-1960) and rector of Stellenbosch University (1954-1969), H.B. Thom, who served on *Kavalier*'s board of directors from 1961, was appointed chair of the script committee. *Kavaliers* justified Thom's position: "Every sign points to the fact that Thom is suitable to become chairman, since he carries a comprehensive knowledge of the Afrikaner and his

¹⁶⁹ GLD, HBT collection, 191 KAV.1.4.83, Agendas: "Direksievergaderingsnotule", 15 October 1976, p. 118.

¹⁷⁰ Union of Film Producers of South Africa

¹⁷¹ GLD, HBT collection, 191 KAV.1.4.80, Agendas: "Direksievergaderingsnotule", 25 June 1976, p. 99.

¹⁷² GLD, HBT collection, 191 KAV.1.4.51, Agendas, 1966-1978: "Direksievergaderingsnotule", 30 May 1974, p. 183.

¹⁷³ Ivor Wilkins & Hans Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond*, (Jeppestown: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2012), p. A1-A155.

interests.”¹⁷⁴ H.B. Thom and the script committee would determine whether a script could or should be converted into a film, subsequently communicating their decision to the board of directors. Thom argued that the narrative and script served as the “single most important facet” of film production as it ensured the films told the “correct and most valuable” stories.¹⁷⁵ He stated that *Kavaliers*’ objective was to “produce films which are culturally powerful, films which offer South Africa and its people quality and morally sound entertainment, and possibly project the image of South Africa abroad, whilst having a definite entertainment value in foreign countries.”¹⁷⁶ The *Gesinsvriendelike* themes incorporated by the producer should reflect the demands of state, the market and, naturally, the PCB. The *gesinsrolprent*,¹⁷⁷ *Kavaliers* maintained, must embody a culture with which the market could identify, whilst expressing the standards associated with the condition of the Afrikaner people:

“This policy is adopted because we [*Kavaliers*] want to provide a lasting service to our people considering that the power of the household, which is largely responsible for the stability in our country, should be expanded”.¹⁷⁸

Apart from the financial prospects, *Kavaliers* converted a script into a film if the narrative satisfied the following criteria: defamatory and robust language must be avoided, if possible; scenes of violence, sexual intercourse and drug use must be limited (if not for educational purposes); the explicit statements of government officials and cultural leaders should not be undermined; and lastly, scenes which promoted social integration between different racial communities must be avoided.¹⁷⁹ These conditions noted by *Kavaliers* limited the availability of potential stories and scripts. Martin Botha and Johan Blignaut attributed the superficiality of most Afrikaans film productions to these criteria, which limited the industry’s expansion. The production company was also meticulous in selecting its actors as “they unknowingly serve as a symbol for our entire [South African] population.”¹⁸⁰ Although *Kavaliers* maintained that there was no “definite recipe” for film production, most motion pictures developed would incorporate historical themes, albeit as filtered through the company’s own perspective:

¹⁷⁴ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.1.4.8, Agendas: “Memorandum: Byeenkoms oor die bespreking van verhale en draaiboekte”, 21 Augustus 1967, p. 3.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.7v.1.(3/1), Background of the company: “Huidige Samestelling van ons maatskappy”, p. 2.

¹⁷⁷ Film for the entire household, “family entertainment”.

¹⁷⁸ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.7.v.4.(4), Memorandums: “Memo *Debbie*”, 20 May 1965, p. 1.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.7v.1.(3/1), Background of the company: “Huidige Samestelling van ons maatskappy”, (n.d.), p. 2.

“The materiality of a theme, as well as its humanity, can be regarded as the prerequisite of success, for example, stories situated within the South African goldmines, terrorism, boycotts, the Middle Eastern crises and other cases of actual interest.”¹⁸¹

Hans en die Rooinek (1961)

After the Sharpeville massacre (21 March 1960), the South African government intensified its endeavours to eliminate the forces that threatened the jurisdiction of the apartheid state. The Unlawful Organisations Act 34 promulgated on 7 April 1960 banned political movements, including the ANC and the Pan Africanist Congress, while anti-apartheid activists such as the leaders of uMkhonto we Sizwe (the military wing of the African National Congress) were taken into custody (1963) and security measures intensified (Sabotage Act of 1963).¹⁸² Though racial segregation was intensified, the state encouraged the social unity between the Afrikaner and English-speaking whites. The National Party (NP) deployed this strategy as a measure to reinforce its political power within the parliamentary system. The NP’s official political opposition between 1948 and 1970, namely the United Party (UP), obtained substantial support from the English-speaking public and media. During the general election held on 16 April 1958, the UP, led by Sir de Villiers Graaf, obtained 53 seats, whilst the NP, headed by Dr Hendrik F. Verwoerd, won 103 seats.¹⁸³ UP supporters identified with the liberal inclinations of the party as well as with its policy of preserving strong diplomatic ties with Britain.¹⁸⁴ In 1958 Dr Verwoerd attempted to secure the English vote by means of appointing English-speaking whites to his cabinet, emphasising the socio-economic threats posed by African nationalists and communists (“*Swartgevaar*”) and utilised the media (including *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies*) to promote white domination and the social ties between Afrikaners and English South Africans. South Africa, as will be explained in the subsection *Hoor My Lied*, experienced an economic upsurge after it became a republic in 1961, thus tempering concerns amongst some English voters about the negative economic effects of South Africa’s exit from the British Commonwealth and the growing international lobby against apartheid. The general election held on 30 March 1966 indicated that the methods utilised by the NP were successful. One

¹⁸¹ GLD, HBT,191 KAV.1.4.8, Agendas, 1966-1977: “Memorandum: Byeenkoms oor die bespreking van verhale en draaiboeke”, 21 August 1967, p. 3.

¹⁸² Coenraad J. Coetzee, *Aspekte van die Geskiedenis van Jamie Uys Film Produksies/ Kavalier Films Beperk, c. 1969-1979: Kommersiële Opportuniste of Kultureel/Ideologiese Entrepreneurs?* (Ongepubliseerde Honneurs, Universiteit van Stellenbosch, 2014), p. 21. Dan O’Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The Apartheid State and the Politics of the National Party, 1948-1994*, (Randburg: Ohio University Press, 1996), p. 116.

¹⁸³ Joan Rydon, “The South African General Elections”, *The Australian Quarterly* 30 (1958), p. 30.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30-31.

point three million South Africans voted in the 1966 election. The NP won 126 seats, whilst the UP obtained 39 seats.¹⁸⁵ The NP's socio-political influence expanded significantly.

Responding to the needs of the state, *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* produced a comedy *Hans en die Rooinek* in 1961 with the intention of eliminating the social antipathy between the country's two white population groups. *Hans en die Rooinek*, along with its English version which was distributed internationally, *Sidney and the Boer*, was written and directed by Jamie Uys; it was edited by Elmo de Witt and Sam Sklair provided the production's music.¹⁸⁶ The film, through a comical narrative, demonstrated that hostilities between Afrikaners and English-speaking whites can be eradicated as cooperation ensured a harmonious existence. Hans Botha, an Afrikaner played by Jamie Uys, and Sidney Spring, an Englishman played by Bob Courtney, are caught up in an argument caused by language differences during a bus tour. A fellow traveller challenges Hans and Sidney to walk from Wilderness to Johannesburg. The journey would ultimately decide whether an Afrikaner or an Englishman is superior. The men accepted the challenge despite appeals from their female companions, Martie (Emsie Botha) and Ann (Wynona Cheyney). The challenge was aimed at establishing a relationship between the pair, since cooperation would make the journey much easier. However, the men chose to ignore one another, subsequently arriving in Johannesburg after an arduous experience. Upon their arrival, however, they encountered Martie and Ann, and Hans falls in love with the English women and Sidney with the Afrikaner. The film's box office success exceeded the expectations of the company. For example, financial statements indicated a revenue of R17 050 for November 1961 – R7 050 more than what was expected.¹⁸⁷ Encouraged by the success of the film, Jamie Uys would produce two further comedies based on the same premise, *Lord Oom Piet* (1962) and *All the Way to Paris* (1967) produced by *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* and *Mimosa Films* respectively. Uys argued:

“The good-natured mockery was apparently equally popular amongst Afrikaans speakers and English speakers, and made an important contribution towards promoting a healthy relationship between the two language groups.”¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ H. Lever, “Factors Underlying Change in the South African General Election of 1970”, *The British Journal of Sociology* 23 (1972), p. 237.

¹⁸⁶ Andre le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 82.

¹⁸⁷ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV 3. (1/1), Financial Statements: “Kontantbegroting tot November 1962”. (n.d.), n.p.

¹⁸⁸ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.4 (1/3), Annual Reports: “Negende Jaarverslag: Voorsittersrede”, 4 November 1963, p. 1.

Debbie (1965)

Debbie, a screen adaptation of Tryna du Toit's novel, *Groen Koring*, was produced by *Jamie Uys Films* in 1964-65 and directed by Elmo de Witt.¹⁸⁹ The production serves as an example of how film production companies were restricted by traditional Afrikaner Christian values. The Publications Control Board, under the instruction of its chairperson Jannie Kruger, considered the themes of the film as contentious and controversial, notwithstanding the fact that "*Debbie's* presentation was terribly sentimental with absolutely no explicit scenes."¹⁹⁰ As such, the controversy around the production requires elucidation. The narrative is based on the life of a young Afrikaner teenager, Debbie, played by Suzanne van Oudtshoorn, whose relationship with her first love Paul (Leon le Roux) results in an unexpected pregnancy.¹⁹¹ This disrupts the lives of the families involved, as the unborn child is the product of a sexual relationship outside of marriage.

Portraying sexual intercourse outside of a marital relationship was a source of great concern to the apartheid state, the Reformed Churches and the Publications Control Board, as such behaviour did not conform to Afrikaners' conservative values. Even though the 1960s is renowned for the upward social mobility of the *volk*, effected through economic mobilisation, urbanisation and skills development, most Afrikaners still adhered to strict Protestant doctrines. The NP, along with the Afrikaans churches, maintained that the conservative Afrikaner family was the core of social and political stability in apartheid South Africa. The Publication Board feared that *Debbie* would encourage pre-marital sexual intercourse amongst Afrikaner youths, or even worse, lead to Afrikaners adopting other liberal characteristics such as 'racial mixing' or homosexuality.¹⁹² The NP's political support relied on a staunch Afrikaner conservatism and accordingly an age restriction of 4-16 years was imposed on the production.¹⁹³

Jamie Uys Filmproduksies immediately protested the age restriction imposed by the board, since its source of income was dependent on its features being viewed by Afrikaner households, particularly in drive-in theatres. The *gesinsvriendelike* entertainment guaranteed the desired

¹⁸⁹ Coenraad J. Coetzee, *Aspekte van die Geskiedenis van Jamie Uys Film Produksies/ Kavalier Films Beperk, c. 1969-1979: Kommersiële Opportuniste of Kultureel/Ideologiese Entrepreneurs?* (Ongepubliseerde Honneurs, Universiteit van Stellenbosch 2014), p. 26.

¹⁹⁰ Franz Marx, interviewed by Coenraad J. Coetzee, Stellenbosch University, 15 April 2015.

¹⁹¹ Andre I. Le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm* (Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria, 1982), p. 83.

¹⁹² GLD, HBT collection, 191 KAV.7v.4.(4), Memorandums, "Memo *Debbie*", 20 May 1965, p. 2-3.

¹⁹³ Andre I. Le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm* (Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria, 1982), p. 84.

box office revenues as the film penetrated the biggest possible market. However, the imposed restriction effectively reduced the market, since many Afrikaners regarded cinema attendance as a family activity. Film distributors and exhibitors would, as a result, rather distribute and display films with fewer financial risks, regardless of Jamie Uys's past successes.

The board of directors of *Jamie Uys Filmproduksies* (Jamie Uys Films) drafted a memorandum, which stated the policies of the production company and the objectives of the film, and sent it to the Deputy Minister of the Interior.¹⁹⁴ They argued that *Debbie* was based on the novel, *Groen Koring*, which was in the FAK selection of Afrikaans books and was a prescribed text in libraries across schools in the Transvaal (the novel was published by *Voortrekker Pers Ltd*, a company renowned for publishing reading material aimed at the entire Afrikaner household);¹⁹⁵ the popular Afrikaans director Elmo de Witt – who was dubbed the “Quiet Man” of the South African film industry¹⁹⁶ – would guarantee an aesthetically pleasing production as he “maintains the highest moral standards”;¹⁹⁷ Hollywood productions such as *Fanny* (1961) and *Parrish* (1961) incorporated the same themes, were tastefully developed and received a positive response from the American public;¹⁹⁸ the most prominent church and cultural leaders, youth leaders, school principals and women organisations were consulted¹⁹⁹ before the production of the film; and lastly, the media were requested to avoid writing sensational reports on the development of the film.²⁰⁰ *Jamie Uys Films* stated that a rough-cut version of *Debbie* was shown in Pretoria on 30 March 1965 and was attended by prominent figures from the world of economics and politics, as well as the Director of Education.²⁰¹ The general response was that the film had educational value, since *Debbie* dramatized the unintended consequences of sexual intercourse before marriage; Paul's father, Chris Hugo (Gert van der Berg), arranged for the adoption of Debbie's child, whilst her own father, Mr Malan (Siegfried Mynhardt), forbids her from living in his house.²⁰²

¹⁹⁴ Coenraad J. Coetzee, *Aspekte van die Geskiedenis van Jamie Uys Film Produksies/ Kavalier Films Beperk, c. 1969-1979: Kommersiële Opportuniste of Kultureel/Ideologiese Entrepreneurs?* (Ongepubliseerde Honneurs, Universiteit van Stellenbosch, 2014), p. 28.

¹⁹⁵ GLD, HBT collection, 191 KAV.7v.4.(4), Memorandums: “Memo *Debbie*”, 20 May 1965, p. 1-2.

¹⁹⁶ Elmo de Witt was affiliated with Kavalier Film Productions for 18 years when he became the Director of Kavalier Film Studios.

¹⁹⁷ GLD, HBT collection, 191 KAV.7.v.4.(4), Memorandums: “Memo *Debbie*”, 20 May 1965, p. 1-2.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ The memorandum did not provide any specific names for these figures and organisations.

²⁰⁰ GLD, HBT collection, 191 KAV.7v.4.(4), Memorandums: “Memo *Debbie*”, 20 May 1965, p. 2.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.* The source did not specify the name.

²⁰² Coenraad J. Coetzee, *Aspekte van die Geskiedenis van Jamie Uys Film Produksies/ Kavalier Films Beperk, c. 1969-1979: Kommersiële Opportuniste of Kultureel/Ideologiese Entrepreneurs?* (Ongepubliseerde Honneurs, Universiteit van Stellenbosch, 2014), p. 28.

Jamie Uys Films was optimistic that the age restriction would be lifted as the memorandum asserted that *Debbie* should not be perceived as controversial but as educational. However, the Deputy Minister and the Publication Board initially disregarded the filmmaker's appeal. Disappointment was subsequently followed by outrage, when the Publication Board decided that a more stringent age restriction of 4-21 years should be imposed on the film.²⁰³ *Jamie Uys Films* decided to utilize its connections in the media, which in turn guaranteed positive reviews of the production. The endeavour was successful as *Jamie Uys Films* arranged a screening of *Debbie*, which would be attended and evaluated by individuals appointed by the Deputy Minister.²⁰⁴ After much deliberation, *Jamie Uys Films*' appeal was ultimately accepted and the imposed age restriction was lifted by the Publication Board.²⁰⁵ According to Schalk J. Botha, *Debbie* became the producer's most profitable film.²⁰⁶

Debbie indicates how an Afrikaans film producer had to adapt to the constraints of the social and political context. Even a company as prominent as *Jamie Uys Films* – which had ties with the Broederbond and media – had to adhere to the regulations established by the state to generate a profit. Undoubtedly the influential figures within *Jamie Uys Films* enabled the company to manipulate the state to some extent; however, *Debbie* proves that the government acted as a crucial agent in the construction and development of the market. The artistic restrictions imposed by censorship ensured that Afrikaans films were superficial, as they could not include themes that reflected the true social and political nature of apartheid South Africa.

Hoor my Lied (1967)

Historians such as Albert Grundlingh justifiably label the 1960s as a golden era for the Afrikaner nationalist.²⁰⁷ He attributes this to the unprecedented economic growth and prosperity of the time, the establishment of the Republic of South Africa in 1961, and the confirmation of the political dominance of the Afrikaner *volk* under Verwoerd's government (1958-1966). By 1961 75% of the entire Afrikaner community were urbanised and determined to obtain employment that offered stable financial prospects.²⁰⁸ Direct foreign investment grew

²⁰³ GLD, HBT collection, 191 KAV 1 (3/21), Agendas: "Direksievergaderingsnotule", 25 June 1965, p. 2.

²⁰⁴ The date and names of the individuals were not specified.

²⁰⁵ Coenraad J. Coetzee, *Aspekte van die Geskiedenis van Jamie Uys Film Produksies/ Kavalier Films Beperk, c. 1969-1979: Kommersiële Opportuniste of Kultureel/Ideologiese Entrepreneurs?* (Ongepubliseerde Honneurs, Universiteit van Stellenbosch, 2014), p. 29.

²⁰⁶ GLD, HBT, 191. KAV. 4. (1/7), Annual Report: "Voorsittersverslag", (n.d.), p. 1.

²⁰⁷ Albert Grundlingh, "Are we Afrikaners Getting too Rich?" *Cornucopia and Change in Afrikanerdom in the 1960s*, *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21(2008), p. 143.

²⁰⁸ David Welsh, *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2009), p. 10.

from \$3 billion in 1960 to nearly \$8 billion by the end of the decade.²⁰⁹ Technological advancements in agriculture, manufacturing and the mining sector, the establishment and development of tertiary learning institutions, and the exploitation of cheap black labour ensured that South Africa's Gross Domestic Product rose from \$7.36 billion in 1960 to \$28.45 billion in 1973.²¹⁰ South Africa's Gross External Debt remained relatively low at \$3.2 billion.²¹¹ Forty-eight thousand white, skilled immigrants moved to SA from 1960 to 1966, providing new labour and capital.²¹² South Africa's economy as a result grew at an unprecedented annual rate of 5.5% from 1960 to 1970.²¹³ The National Party was determined to use any means necessary to demonstrate that the country was a modern, Westernised state. This perception would guarantee and strengthen diplomatic ties with other Westernised states, contributing to the economy in terms of tourism and white immigration. However, more significantly, the capitalist connections with the West would ensure the protection of South Africa's social and political status.

Hoor My Lied (Hear My Song) was released for distribution on 6 November 1967; it was developed by Tommie Meyer, directed by Elmo De Witt and distributed by Sterfilms, and promoted the economic and technological prosperity of the modern Afrikaner.²¹⁴ *Hoor My Lied* premiered at the Voortrekker Monument on 24 September 1967. Fifty-thousand people attended the premier, thus exceeding the previous world record held by *Doodkry is Min*.²¹⁵ The musical was produced and marketed for both the local and international market, reflecting South Africa as a tourist utopia with a highly modernised economic industry. Renowned for being the first Afrikaans film to generate box office revenues exceeding R1 million,²¹⁶ the production was highly praised, particularly by the Afrikaans media.²¹⁷ Naspers suggested that the production projected a 'Hollywood' ambience, since many of the scenes were filmed in

²⁰⁹ Albert Grundlingh, "Are we Afrikaners Getting too Rich?" *Cornucopia and Change in Afrikanerdom in the 1960s*, *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21(2008), p. 144.

²¹⁰ Trading Economics, "South African GDP", Accessed July 2, 2014: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/gdp>.

²¹¹ CH Fernstein, *An Economic History of South Africa: Conquest, Discrimination and Development*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 229.

²¹² Eustacia J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mothercity: Landscape, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989* (Unpublished PhD., University of Cape Town, 2012), p. 70.

²¹³ Albert Grundlingh. "Are we Afrikaners Getting too Rich?" *Cornucopia and Change in Afrikanerdom in the 1960s*. *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21(2008), p. 144.

²¹⁴ Andre I. Le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria, 1982), p. 93.

²¹⁵ GLD, HBT, 191. KAV. 4. (1/7), Annual Report: "Voorsittersverslag", (n.d.), p. 3.

²¹⁶ R35 million in today's money taking inflation into account.

²¹⁷ Eustacia J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mothercity: Landscape, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989* (Unpublished PhD., University of Cape Town, 2012), p. 75.

New York. *The Transvaler*, for example, argued that the success of *Hoor My Lied* could be attributed to its emulation of both Afrikaans and international film characteristics.²¹⁸ The production surpassed *The Sound of Music* (1965) as the most successful film ever exhibited in South Africa, making 1967/68 Kavaliers' most profitable financial year (R137 531 profit).²¹⁹

Hoor My Lied is centred on the lives of Dr Dawid Retief (Gè Korsten), who practises at Groote Schuur Hospital, and his daughter Marietjie (Lindie Roux). They were both involved in a serious car accident and suffered serious injuries; Marietjie was paralysed, whilst Dawid sustained a head injury that would render him blind in the space of two years. Lydia de Graaf (Helga van Wyk), a nurse also employed at the hospital, was deemed responsible for the accident and engulfed in feelings of guilt. De Graaf subsequently decided that she would provide emotional support for Dawid and Marietjie. Dr Retief, seeking specialised medical help and accompanied by De Graaf, took Marietjie to New York in an attempt to get her walking again. However, Marietjie's medical care is expensive and Dr Retief's eyesight was worsening. Left with no alternative, Retief concluded that the best means of generating an income was by singing in concerts. During a concert Marietjie was overwhelmed by shock when her father completely lost his vision. The extent of her shock was so great that she rose from her chair, thus regaining her ability to walk.²²⁰

As discussed in Chapter One, the modernisation of the South African economy led to the urbanisation and potential upward social mobility of the Afrikaner. These idealistic aspirations of the *volk* were reflected in *Hoor My Lied*. Dr Dawid Retief symbolises the new professional identity and socio-economic mobilisation of the Afrikaner. A globalised atmosphere is projected in the film since many scenes are located in New York. Initially situated in Cape Town, the film portrays the city as a utopia embodying the integration of economic modernity and traditional Afrikaner values. Eustacia J. Riley argues that this balance is achieved by scenes emphasising the serenity of Cape Town's outdoor activities.²²¹ *Hoor My Lied*, for example, utilises the Cape landscape such as Table Mountain, the sea and Cape flora to construct this sense of tranquillity. This is a fairly uncommon feature as the urban environment is usually depicted as a bustling, even dangerous, milieu, as seen in films such as *Scarface* (1932), *Citizen*

²¹⁸ *Die Transvaler*, December 31, 1966. "Kavalier-Films Gaan in VSA Skiet", p. 2.

²¹⁹ Approximately R9,9 million in 2016.GLD, HBT, 191. KAV. 4. (1/13), Annual Report: "Voorsittersverslag", 30 June 1968, p. 2. GLD, HBT, 191. KAV. 4. (1/12), Annual Report: "Voorsittersverslag", 30 June 1968, p. 1.

²²⁰ Andre I. Le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm* (Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria, 1982), p. 93.

²²¹ Eustacia J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mothercity: Landscape, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989* (Unpublished PhD, University of Cape Town, 2012), p. 75.

Kane (1941) and as late as *Gangs of New York* (2002). *Hoor My Lied* reflects an optimistic and idealised perspective of South Africa as it deliberately avoids depicting the actual levels of poverty and tension – particularly in the African communities in the social and political discourse of the races. In fact, the absence of any form of black political agency in *Hoor My Lied* is evident. For instance, Caesar (a black South African) is employed as a gardener/housekeeper serving in the Retief household.²²² The film identifies the new independent republic as a peaceful Westernised state, endorsing South Africa as a society which assures employment opportunities for all and a glamorous lifestyle. White leisure culture in Cape Town is shown in numerous seaside scenes (driving on speedboats, for example).²²³ One's attention is also focused on the country's modern infrastructure and architecture (Groote Schuur Hospital, Hospital Bend and Settler's Way),²²⁴ emphasising economic and technological development. The representation of Cape Town promotes South Africa as a tourist destination, whilst simultaneously encouraging Afrikaner urbanisation and white immigration.

Hoor My Lied conveys the relationship between Afrikaner traditional values and industrial advancement in an economically transitional society. In 1981 the *Vereniging van Vollengte Rolprentvervaardigers van Suid-Afrika*²²⁵ maintained that *Hoor My Lied* is a “subtle yet effective propaganda-weapon... it stimulates [Afrikaans] culture and music [and] provides financial, cultural and political advantages.”²²⁶

Conclusion

Government subsidisation provided the necessary capital for the industry to expand. The subsidy amendments made by the Department of Trade and Industries suggests that the government wanted the Afrikaans film to compete with foreign productions. It is undeniable that subsidisation was an absolute necessity, considering the size and heterogeneity of South Africa's market. The possibility of expansion increased when Sanlam (Satbel) and the Schlesinger Organisation acquired Twentieth-Century-Fox's film interests. The localisation of South Africa's distribution interests made the circulation of Afrikaans films an aspect of

²²² Eustacia J. Riley, *From Matieland to Mothercity: Landscape, Identity and Place in Feature Films set in the Cape Province, 1947-1989* (Unpublished PhD, University of Cape Town, 2012), p. 75.

²²³ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

²²⁵ Association of Feature Film Producers of South Africa – a prominent South African producers' association discussed in Chapter Four.

²²⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 2, Memorandum: “Voorlegging oor Vollengte Rolprente”, 9 June 1981, p. 1.

corporate social responsibility. Furthermore, the size and nature of the Afrikaans market encouraged conservative entertainment, as endorsed by the Publications Control Board, since Afrikaans film producers deemed films aimed at the entire household (and the lowest common denominator) as most profitable. However, these factors, i.e. the socio-cultural forces, subsidisation, localisation of the distribution and exhibition industry, censorship and the market, created an unstable cinematic environment. The South African cinematic environment encouraged quantity rather than quality (Jamie Uys' resignation from *Kavaliers* serves as a prime example). This had to do with the impact of the PCB as well as of the market. Censorship, coupled with the conservative inclinations of the market, discouraged Afrikaans film producers from exploring a wider range of possible topics such as addressing significant themes that reflected the true nature of South Africa. This is not to suggest that the inclusion of controversial themes (whether liberal, communist, etc.) is the only criterion of a quality film; however, censorship and the market limited what the film companies could produce and made Afrikaans films superficial.

An additional factor can be attributed to the distribution and exhibition of Afrikaans films. Twentieth-Century-Fox only distributed films according to their potential financial merits, regardless of the country of origin. The profitability of a film determined its selection. Satbel, encouraged by the socio-economic demands of the government and the market, felt it had a social responsibility to increase the distribution of Afrikaans films. Finally, though amendments were made, state subsidies were exploited by companies whose main objective was to generate a profit rather than to contribute to the expansion of a viable industry.

Lastly, *Kavaliers*, an industry leader, mirrored the context of the South African film producing industry. The company aimed to produce as many films as possible within the shortest practical timeframe, thus setting a poor example for aspiring producers to follow. Consequently, the Afrikaans cinematic industry failed to establish an appropriate equilibrium between quantity and quality before the advent of television services in South Africa.

Chapter Three: The Lead-up to South Africa's Television Services, c.1924 - c.1971

"The experience that many Afrikaner churches and cultural leaders obtained abroad was that television was an untamed wild horse... who would put South Africa in the saddle?" – P.J. Meyer (Former Chair of the SABC)¹

Introduction

The Afrikaans cinematic film industry had developed significantly since the introduction of the subsidy scheme in 1956. However, whilst quantity increased, critics continuously maintained that most Afrikaans productions lacked artistic quality. This should be attributed to limitations stemming from factors such as the exploitation of subsidisation, censorship, the localisation of the distributing and exhibition industry and the market. From a corporate perspective, the industry was economically unstable. However, in 1971 the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Matthys van Rensburg, made an announcement that rattled the very core of the Afrikaans cinematic film industry: a television service was to be introduced in South Africa. This chapter aims to provide the reader the backstory of SABC-TV, i.e. economic, technical and political factors which ultimately shaped the preparation, qualities and characteristics of local Television broadcasts and the latter's influence on local cinema. This section reflects on the lead-up to the introduction of South Africa's television services from 1924 to 1971 by looking at the early development of television (TV) and TV broadcasting, the reasons for South Africa not immediately adopting a television-service, and the formation and expansion of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). The history of the SABC's radio services during South Africa's pre-TV era necessitates a discussion as the statutorily-controlled television service was integrated into the broadcaster's existing radio service. This will be followed by a discussion of the influence of politics in delaying the introduction of television and the factors which ultimately contributed to the government's decision to implement the service. This chapter does not provide a detailed account of the extensive and drawn-out debate on the decision to introduce South Africa's TV services (particularly between the ruling NP and the opposition party, the UP).² Only the most significant contours are reflected upon in this thesis, such as the effects of SABC-TV, rather than the process of its introduction. The operations of the Meyer Commission, responsible for investigating and

¹ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie vêr genoeg nie: 'n Persoonlike rekenskap van vyftig jaar georganiseerde Afrikanerskap*, (Johannesburg: Perskor, 1984), p. 144.

² For a more comprehensive discussion of the debates, see Carin Bevan's *Putting Up Screens: A history of Television in South Africa, 1929-1976* (2008), P.J. Meyer's *Nog nie vêr genoeg nie: 'n Persoonlike rekenskap van vyftig jaar georganiseerde Afrikanerskap* (1984) and Ivor Wilkins & Hans Strydom's *The Super Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond* (2012).

reporting on the most economic and politically effective TV system to adopt (an element which contributed to the popularity and, therefore, success and impact of SABC-TV), will be discussed. A section will consider what the Meyer Commission thought about how television would affect the South African cinematic film industry.

“Little Black Box”³

The German engineer Paul Gottlieb Nipkow invented the first device foreshadowing the modern-day television in 1884.⁴ His apparatus, named the electromechanical television, was able to scan and send images over short distances (photoconductivity). In 1923 Vladimir Zworykin (a Russian inventor and engineer) developed the iconoscope (a camera tube), a significant milestone as the device was the first that could be utilised for broadcasting.⁵ In the same year Zworykin engineered the kinescope,⁶ a cathode-ray tube used in TV receivers. However, according to the reports of the SABC, the name synonymous with pioneering television broadcasting is the one of Scottish inventor, John Logie Baird. Baird experimented with Nipkow’s scanning apparatus in an endeavour to develop the invention into a broadcasting medium. In February 1924 Baird illustrated to *Radio Times* (a British radio programme listings magazine) that a mechanical apparatus was capable of transmitting silhouette pictures.⁷ On 25 March 1925 the inventor provided the first public demonstration of this.⁸ On 26 January 1926, with *The Times* present, Baird demonstrated his invention to members of the Royal Institution of Great Britain.⁹ The first long-distance television transmission,¹⁰ initiated by the American-based group, AT&T Bell Labs, was made in April 1927, with pictures telecasted from Washington D.C. and received in New York.¹¹ A month later and not to be outdone, Baird transmitted a signal 705 km between London and Glasgow by means of a telephone line. After

³ A metaphor for television used by Dr Albert Hertzog, who resisted its introduction.

⁴ J.B. du Toit, *Telesieskyn en Werklikheid: Die omstrede medium*, (Kaapstad: Tafelberg Uitgewers, 1994), 109. Coenraad J. Coetzee, *Aspekte van die Geskiedenis van Jamie Uys Film Produksies/ Kavalier Films Beperk, c. 1969-1979: Kommersiële Opportuniste of Kultureel/Ideologiese Entrepreneurs?*, (Ongepubliseerde Honneurs, Universiteit van Stellenbosch, 2014), p. 41.

⁵ Robert Thomas, “Vladimir Zworykin, Television Pioneer, Dies at 92”, *New York Times*, 1 August 1982, Accessed: August 5, 2016: <http://www.nytimes.com/1982/08/01/obituaries/vladimir-zworykin-television-pioneer-dies-at-92.html>.

⁶ Not to be confused with Thomas Edison’s kinetoscope. Also known as telerecording.

⁷ British Broadcasting Corporation, “Historic Figures: John Logie Baird (1888-1946)”, Accessed: August 2, 2016: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/baird_logie.shtml.

⁸ In London. *Ibid*.

⁹ A London-based institution for scientific research and education. British Broadcasting Corporation, “Historic Figures: John Logie Baird (1888-1946)”, Accessed: August 2, 2016: .

¹⁰ Approximately 320 km.

¹¹ Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 99.

establishing the Baird Television Development Company Ltd (Baird's TV Company), Baird oversaw the first transatlantic transmission (London to New York) in 1928. On 3 July 1928 the inventor demonstrated the first colour transmission.¹² In the same year WGY,¹³ a radio outlet of the multinational American conglomerate company, General Electric, obtained the first license to operate an experimental broadcasting station in the USA.¹⁴ During 1929-1932 the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) experimentally transmitted television programmes by means of the Baird broadcasting system.¹⁵ In 1930 the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) and Columbia Broadcasting Services (CBS) erected the second and third stations, respectively, in the USA. The world's first official, regularly scheduled television transmissions were broadcast by the BBC in 1936.¹⁶ NBC's radio outlet, W2XBS,¹⁷ was the first American station to transmit a regular programme in 1939.¹⁸

Television Broadcasting in South Africa



Illustration 7: The SABC's Television Park in Auckland Park, Johannesburg¹⁹

¹² British Broadcasting Corporation, "Historic Figures: John Logie Baird (1888-1946)", Accessed: August 2, 2016: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/baird_logie.shtml.

¹³ Abbreviation for Wireless General Electric in Schenectady.

¹⁴ Michael, Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 99.

¹⁵ The broadcast images received were made up of thirty lines.

¹⁶ The Baird system was ultimately replaced with the all-electronic system developed by EMI-Marconi under the leadership of the Russian, (later Sir) Isaac Schoenberg. Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 99.

¹⁷ Later known as WNBT.

¹⁸ The BBC and NBC would adopt the electronic broadcasting television-system, invented in the late 1930s. The electronic system was technologically superior to the outdated mechanical system. Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 99.

¹⁹ Coenraad J. Coetzee, Photo of the SABC's Television Park, Auckland Park (Johannesburg), 2016.

The first TV demonstration in South Africa was presented in Cape Town, 1929, by the Vice-President, Angus Kennedy, and other representatives of Baird's TV Company.²⁰ However, the chairperson of African Broadcasting Corporation (at the time, South Africa's only radio broadcaster), I.W. Schlesinger, stated that, as a result of economic and broadcasting conditions in South Africa (to be discussed in more detail below), the country could not introduce and maintain a television service. Later, both the government and the SABC maintained that television services could only commence in South Africa once local radio broadcasting had achieved its full technological potential.²¹

For reasons that will be explained, the state reasoned that the South African TV industry had to be managed by a public operator. The introduction of television services in South Africa had been investigated as early as 1937. On 12 May 1937 Rene Caprara, a former Director-General of the SABC, visited the BBC to research the possibility of a television service. But because of the difficulties around expenditure (maintenance) of such a service and the distribution of programmes, the introduction of television services was postponed. TV was again considered during the 1950s but postponed again, as the communication medium was deemed not affordable. The paramount factor that had to be taken into consideration was the audience/market. The SABC and the government had to decide whether enough South Africans had an interest in television, and/or could afford to acquire a television set. For example, the number of viewers required for a successful TV launch was over a quarter of a million, whilst a TV license and set would cost £5 and £100²² respectively.²³ The BBC, for instance, had established a public television service on 22 August 1932.²⁴ By 1935 only 2000 televisions were in use.²⁵ A modified and cheaper service²⁶ was introduced in 1936, but the BBC managed to sell only 3 000 TV sets in two years.²⁷ Considering the nature of South Africa's economic development up until the 1960s, coupled with the costs of acquiring a TV set and paying the license fee, the success of South African television was dependent on the country's small white

²⁰ However, though the demonstration had been a success, the equipment needed for the demonstration had been damaged in transportation. Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 98.

²¹ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: "Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie", 4 November 1970, p. 1.

²² These figures apply to the 1950s.

²³ Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 102.

²⁴ *BBC News*, "How did broadcasting begin?", 22 March 2001, Accessed: 8 March 2017: .

²⁵ The price of a TV was equivalent to that of a small car.

²⁶ The Marconi/EMI system replaced the Baird Televisors.

²⁷ Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 99.

minority. The socio-economic rise of the Afrikaner during the first half of the twentieth century and the increased availability of electricity²⁸ played a significant role in the growth of a technological consumer society in South Africa and, as such, the delay of TV's introduction. One has to refrain from stating, at least from a corporate perspective, that the postponement of the introduction of a South African television service had a "purely political" basis,²⁹ though this was a most significant factor (particularly after the 1950s). Furthermore, the necessary technological experience to establish a TV network had to be obtained. For example, South Africa's average population density was low and communities were widely spread across the country. Technologies had to be developed in order to effectively distribute television broadcasts to white South Africans – and later, the black communities. Wide-spread communication, according to the SABC's Chairperson P.J. Meyer (1959-1981), would be achieved only after South Africa's radio service had fully developed. South African radio broadcasting, in terms of technical considerations (as will be seen), was regarded as the blueprint or basis "for the much more limited and much, much more expensive TV service."³⁰ When the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, Matthys van Rensburg, officially commissioned an inquiry into South African television in December 1969, he stated that the proposed service had to be integrated with the existing radio services.³¹

Formation of the SABC, 1924-1936

The commonalities between radio and television can be explained in the form of an overview of broadcasting history in South Africa. Broadcasting in South Africa commenced in 1924, before the formation of the SABC. The first commercial radio broadcast in the world was made on 2 November 1920 by the KDKA station (headed by Dr Frank Conrad) in Pittsburgh, USA.³² The principal manufacturers of radio apparatus in the United Kingdom formed the British Broadcasting Company Ltd in 1922.³³ John Reith, a Scottish Calvinist and an important figure

²⁸ The electricity public utility, the Electricity Supply Commission (currently known as Eskom), was established only on 1 March 1923 through the Electricity Act of 1922.

²⁹ Jack Boddington, "The Wonderful Phenomenon of Television", *Nexus* 73 (2013), <http://oasisretirementresort.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Nexus-Newsletter-July-2013-PDF.pdf>.

³⁰ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie vër genoeg nie: 'n Persoonlike rekenskap van vyftig jaar georganiseerde Afrikanerskap*, (Johannesburg: Perskor, 1984), p. 143.

³¹ South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1969, p. 9. (See bibliography for information provided by the SABC)

³² Radio was used before as a one-to-one method of communication, especially in the First World War (1914-1918), but had never been used commercially. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, p. 1.

³³ *BBC News*, "How did broadcasting begin?". 22 March 2001, Accessed: August 10, 2016: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/1146543.stm>.

in the establishment of the SABC, was appointed General Manager of the BBC in December 1922.³⁴ Meanwhile in South Africa, experimental broadcasts (licensed by the Postmaster-General) commenced in Johannesburg in 1923 under the auspices of the South African Railways Broadcasting Committee, supported by the Western Electric Company.³⁵ Conditions for commercial broadcasting in South Africa were regulated by the Postmaster-General and the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs in cooperation with the Governor-General.³⁶ Radio listeners had to obtain a license from the Postmaster-General to install a receiving set and also needed a contract from the broadcaster. The fees – private residences were charged a maximum of £2 per set for the service – were payable directly to the broadcaster.³⁷

By 1924 three independent radio broadcasters operated in the metropolitan areas of the Union: Johannesburg (A.S. & T. Broadcasting Company Ltd), Cape Town (Cape Peninsula Publicity Broadcasting Association Ltd) and Durban (Durban Corporation). However, as with the South Africa cinematic industry, common broadcasting difficulties emerged (expenditure, small market and the large size of the country) and required immediate attention and joint action. A formal conference, attended by representatives of the abovementioned broadcasters, was held on 20 November 1924. The South African Broadcasting Council was created.³⁸ Mr J.S. Dunn, a Cape Town representative, was elected as the council's chairperson. From 1924-1927 the three radio broadcasting companies continued to sustain critical financial losses. A.S. & T. Broadcasting reasoned that the inability to make sufficient revenue to meet the expenditure should be ascribed to "radio pirates" – those who owned radio sets yet did not pay the license fees required. A.S. & T. Broadcasting generated a profit of £15.6s.4d in its first year of existence. In 1925, however, the company sustained a loss of £4,495. Within a space of two years the number of licence holders dropped from 9 000 to 5 613.³⁹ Consequently, the Radio Act, 1926 became law and prohibited the use of a radio without a licence from the Postmaster-General.⁴⁰ The Act permitted the Postmaster-General, or those authorised by him, to inspect

³⁴ British Broadcasting Company, "History of the BBC- Beginnings: Sir John Reith", Accessed: August 2, 2016, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/historyofthebbc/research/culture/reith-1>.

³⁵ An American electrical engineering and manufacturing company. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, p. 1.

³⁶ Act No 10 of 1911.

³⁷ Regulations and amendments made to the licensing fees would appear in the Government Gazette. The Postmaster-General could withdraw a license of the listener if he perceived the act as in the interest of the public. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, p. 4.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

the licences and apparatus of radio users on demand. If found guilty, a user could be fined a maximum of £5, the apparatus could be confiscated and/or the person could be prohibited from obtaining a licence for a specified period. The press, including newspapers such as the *Rand Daily Mail*, published and circulated articles which warned the public that the industry could collapse if wireless-set users failed to pay the licences.⁴¹

But this failed to make a difference. On 31 January 1927 A.S. & T. Broadcasting was forced to cease its operations because of financial difficulties. The government, including the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, Walter Madeley, considered nationalising the broadcasting industry as in the United Kingdom. When the British Broadcasting Company Ltd was established, sales failed to meet expectations, since listeners bought unlicensed sets or even constructed their own receivers. Subsequently, the British Royal Charter founded the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on 1 January 1927.⁴² The BBC, a public service broadcaster, took over the operations of the British Broadcasting Company Ltd.⁴³ However, the South African government was reluctant to nationalise the industry, considering that the total local listenership did not exceed 15 000 in 1927 (less than 1% of South Africa's white population at the time), compared to the United Kingdom's 2,3 million.⁴⁴ The state reasoned that the industry first had to develop.

The African Broadcasting Corporation, 1927-1936

A.S. & T. Broadcasting, before its closure, approached Walter Madeley to transfer the broadcast license to a figure who had revolutionised the South African cinematic film industry, Isidore W. Schlesinger. The state considered that South African broadcasting should be centralised under the management of the Schlesinger Organisation, since the company "was the only one which could afford immediate assistance with the talent and resources at its control and start broadcasting at the earliest possible date."⁴⁵ On 1 March 1927 Minister Madeley informed I.W. Schlesinger that the South African state would issue a broadcasting license to the Schlesinger Organisation, if certain conditions were met. Some of the terms included that Schlesinger must operate a public broadcasting organisation known as African Broadcasting

⁴¹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, p. 15.

⁴² SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, p. 1.

⁴³ John Reith would act as Director-General.

⁴⁴ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, p. 20.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

Company Ltd (ABC); the government can nominate two Directors to the Board; ABC was required to construct a more powerful broadcasting station in Johannesburg; 90% of the profits made should be divided equally between the state and company whilst the residue (a non-cumulative dividend of 10%) should be allocated to shareholders; and government will consider transferring the Cape Peninsula Broadcasting Company and the Durban Corporation's licenses, if desired, to ABC. Schlesinger approved the terms and conditions and ABC was established in Johannesburg (1927) with capital valued at £50 000.⁴⁶ Broadcasting services commenced on 1 April 1927.

I.W. Schlesinger, however, maintained that ABC's operations would be uneconomical if the Durban Corporation and the Cape Peninsula Broadcasting Company (CPBC) broadcast independently. In May 1927 both the Durban Corporation and CPBC willingly accepted Schlesinger's proposal to be purchased by ABC as the companies could not sustain any further losses. ABC managed to effectively centralise, as happened with the film industry, South African radio broadcasting within a space of a few months. However, from 1927 to 1929 the total local listenership increased from 13 114 to only 17 225.⁴⁷ The minimal increase, coupled with the erection of a station (10 KW medium-frequency transmitter) in Maraisburg and the increased transmitter power in Johannesburg, resulted in a financial deficit of £15 000 at the end of the 1928/29 fiscal year.⁴⁸ The financial situation was problematic as ABC aimed to construct transmitter stations in Pretoria and Bloemfontein. Operating the proposed stations would require a minimum expenditure of £52 000 for the first three years and £47 000 per annum thereafter.⁴⁹ ABC approached the government for financial assistance (proposed subsidies) but failed in the endeavour. As a last resort, ABC deployed a strategy known as the Blue Free Voucher Scheme.

The Blue Free Voucher Scheme was an arrangement between ABC and wireless radio set dealers. Radio dealers added an amount to the radios' selling prices, which accounted for a listener's license fee. The agreement also contracted radio dealers to pay ABC in bulk periodically. T.G.F Rhodes⁵⁰ stated: "(NB) There was nothing 'free' about this 'Blue Free

⁴⁶ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, p. 28-31.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34

⁵⁰ An important figure in South African radio broadcasting who would serve on the SABC's Board of Directors.

Voucher Scheme', except the name..."⁵¹ The scheme eliminated piracy as it was impossible for an individual to purchase a radio set unlawfully. The scheme was a success as the number of license holders increased from 17 225 in 1929 to 132 283 in 1936.⁵² As a result, South African radio broadcasting expanded considerably. When ABC assumed control of radio broadcasting in 1927, South Africa had three medium-frequency transmitters in Johannesburg (1 KW), Cape Town (1½ KW) and Durban (1½ KW). ABC constructed new 1 KW stations in Maraisburg (as mentioned), Milnerton (1934)⁵³, Grahamstown (1934)⁵⁴ and Pietermaritzburg (1935);⁵⁵ a 200-watt transmitter in Pretoria (1928)⁵⁶ was installed; and a 1-KW station in Bloemfontein (1931).⁵⁷ During the negotiations between Minister Madeley and I.W. Schlesinger in 1927, the former stressed that ABC's broadcasting license would only be renewed (in 1932) if power improvements were made to broadcasting stations in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. Furthermore, the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs stated that Schlesinger's control of South African broadcasting would not exceed 10 years – in other words, his management would cease in 1937. However, the expansion achieved by ABC's Board was a source of deliberation in the government. The state had to decide whether ABC's broadcasting license should be renewed for an additional five years (1937-1942) or to nationalise South Africa's radio broadcasting industry. The value of nationalising South African broadcasting was threefold, according to the newly appointed Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, Senator C.F. Clarkson and Postmaster-General Lenton: broadcasting could be utilised as a means of entertainment and instruction; radio was a speedy and economical source of communication between government and South African citizens; and the potential of broadcasting could be misused if operated by a private enterprise.⁵⁸ However, on the other hand, ABC was financially stable and the broadcasts satisfied the majority of listeners.

Minister C.F. Clarkson argued that if South African broadcasting was to be nationalised, the nationalisation process in the United Kingdom was the most suitable to adopt, "if adapted to

⁵¹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, p. 35.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁵³ On the outskirts of Cape Town.

⁵⁴ To serve the Eastern Province.

⁵⁵ In Natal.

⁵⁶ The station was closed down in October of the same year, since ABC thought that the 10 KW station in Johannesburg was adequate. However, service in Pretoria resumed in 1930.

⁵⁷ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, p. 40-42.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 46-47.

meet South African conditions.”⁵⁹ In May 1934 Prime Minister General J.B.M. Hertzog requested Director-General of the BBC, John Reith, to advise on the future of South African broadcasting. After his arrival and examination of local broadcasting, Lord Reith provided a report on his conclusions on 21 March 1935.⁶⁰ Paragraph 12 of the report summarised his judgements:

“But the service is capable of immense improvement, to a standard in fact out of recognition with the present, and both with respect to coverage and programme content. This observation is not a reflection on the present Company; I [Reith] believe Mr. Schlesinger himself would agree with it. He might say that he was not having a fair chance; I would reply that he never could have. And it is not that I overlook the radically different conditions which obtain in the Union and in, say, Great Britain or Germany.”⁶¹

John Reith’s report encouraged J.B.M. Hertzog, Senator Clarkson and the majority of the government to nationalise the South African broadcasting industry. A public service was considered the most effective option as profits would be invested in the broadcaster with aim of enhancing and expanding the corporation’s service.⁶² ABC’s broadcasting license was not renewed when it expired on 31 March 1937.⁶³ Schlesinger’s African Broadcasting Company was replaced by a public utility organisation,⁶⁴ named the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), when ABC’s operations ceased on 31 July 1936.⁶⁵ Schlesinger, it must be stated, did not contest the governments’ intentions. The SABC commenced its broadcasting services on 1 August 1936 when the Broadcasting Act of 1936 (Act No. 22 of 1936) came into effect.⁶⁶ ABC and its assets were purchased for £150 000.⁶⁷ The SABC’s Board of Directors was appointed by the Governor-General in Council. Prof M.C. Botha (Secretary of Education) was elected Chairperson, H.R. Soloman (Solicitor) Vice-Chairman, and Rene Caprara (former

⁵⁹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): “Broadcasting before the SABC was created”, 21 September 1956, p. 46-47.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁶¹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): “Broadcasting before the SABC was created”, 21 September 1956, p. 50.

⁶² In a private enterprise the main objective is accumulating profits.

⁶³ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): “Broadcasting before the SABC was created”, 21 September 1956, p. 53.

⁶⁴ A public organisation founded by Statute.

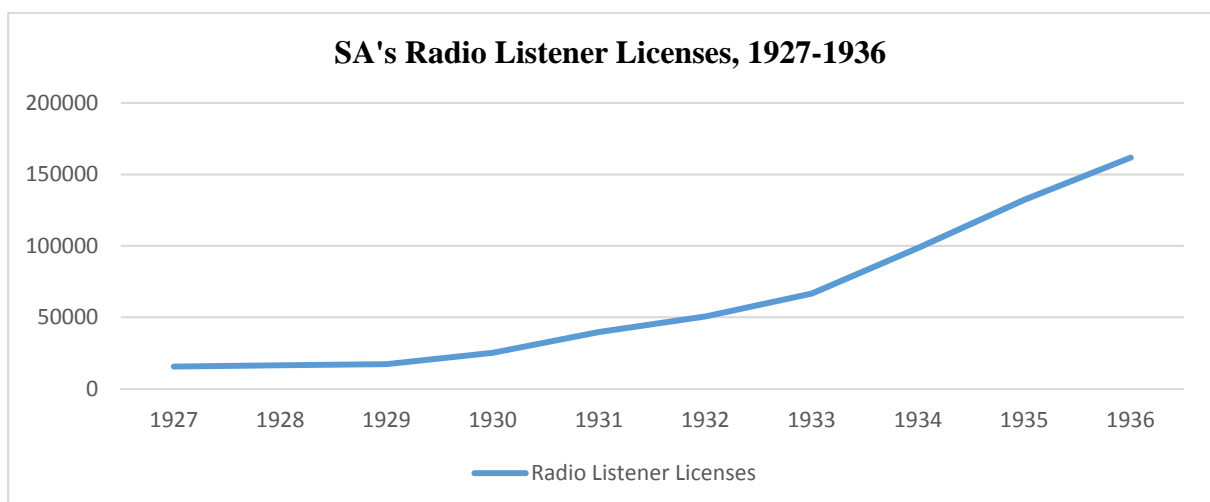
⁶⁵ Though ABC’s license would expire in 1937, Schlesinger stated that the new organisation could start its broadcasts on the date that the SABC’s board found most convenient.

⁶⁶ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1937, p. 1.

⁶⁷ Price fixed by arbitration. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1937, p. 3.

General Manager of ABC) Director-General of the SABC.⁶⁸ One of the first ambitions of the SABC's Board of Directors was to further expand South Africa's broadcasting capabilities by constructing transmitters in the country's rural communities. Table 8 indicates the number of listener's licenses issued between 1926 and 1937.

Table 8: South African Radio Listeners Licenses, 1927-1936⁶⁹			
Year	Company	Number	Increase
1927	ABC	15 509	
1928	ABC	16 380	871
1929	ABC	17 225	845
1930	ABC	25 121	7 896
1931	ABC	39 689	14 568
1932	ABC	50 644	10 995
1933	ABC	66 611	15 967
1934	ABC	98 562	31 951
1935	ABC	132 283	33 721
1936	ABC & SABC	161 767	29 484



⁶⁸ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1937, p. 3. Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC* (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 21.

⁶⁹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, (n.p).

Overview and Expansion of the SABC, 1936-1969

When the SABC assumed control of South African radio broadcasting in 1936, its Board of Directors (Board) had to address the issue of the language policy of the public broadcaster. Article 14 of the Broadcasting Act stipulated that the SABC's radio broadcasts must accommodate "the interests of both the English and Afrikaans culture."⁷⁰ However, a study conducted by the corporation indicated that Afrikaans listeners formed only 20% of the total white listenership.⁷¹ The Board initially decided, to the dissatisfaction of many listeners, that transmission could not be separated according to language as the required expenditure was prohibitive. Afrikaans was therefore only used during programme announcements until October 1937.⁷² In 1937 a broadcast system with two services was established. The "A-Service" provided English programming and the "B-Service" (known today as *Radio Sonder Grense*) broadcast in Afrikaans.⁷³ Upon formation of the SABC, the Board agreed to prohibit the broadcasting of political speeches, commercial advertising and controversial religious services. Censorship was strictly applied as all broadcast material was meticulously examined before each broadcast so as to "avoid the possibility of offending any listener group."⁷⁴

The financial statements of the SABC's first annual report (1 August 1936-31 July 1937) indicate a total expenditure of £248,271.0s.3d, whilst the year-end surplus amounted to £18,814.9s.2d.⁷⁵ Income over expenditure increased by 24% (compared to 1937) by the end of the 1938 financial year as the year-end surplus amounted to £24,712.14s.6d.⁷⁶ South Africa's radio listenership increased to 249 199 in 1939.⁷⁷

Ministerial Control of an Autonomous Corporation

During the twentieth century broadcasting systems across the world were classified in three ways. In the USA, for example, broadcasting was managed through private initiatives.⁷⁸ At the other end of the spectrum were the state broadcasting services located, for instance, in the

⁷⁰ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1937, p. 12.

⁷¹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1937, p. 13.

⁷² Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC* (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 21.

⁷³ Arguably, the two most popular programmes in English and Afrikaans were *Barry Davis and his Radio Rebels* and *Stywe Lyne* respectively.

⁷⁴ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1937, p. 16.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 43-44.

⁷⁶ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1938, p. 39.

⁷⁷ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, (n.p).

⁷⁸ NBC and Columbia Broadcasting Service.

Reichsrundfunk in Germany before the Second World War and in the Soviet Union. The third category is “met halfway between the two extremes of state broadcasting and private initiative”,⁷⁹ namely, the public utility company which was especially prominent in Commonwealth states.⁸⁰ The SABC fits into the last category. According to the Broadcasting Act of 1936, the SABC could technically be considered an autonomous organisation,⁸¹ though the state still exercised a level of authority by means of ministerial control. As indicated, the Governor-General (later the State President after South Africa became a Republic) appointed the members of the Board of Governors with their respective job descriptions.⁸² As such, the Governor-General had the authority to elect the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the SABC. According to Article 2(3) of the Broadcasting Act, the Governor-General had the power to discharge a member if he thought that the latter was guilty of improper conduct and/or was incapable of effectively completing his/her responsibility. The State President acts according to the instructions of cabinet and the Prime Minister.⁸³ Therefore, the final decisions, such as the election of the SABC’s Chairperson, were made by cabinet in the name of the Governor-General, and later the State President. Yet cabinet was not identified as the institution of control, but rather the minister under whom the SABC resorts, i.e. the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs and, after 1970, the Minister of National Education.⁸⁴ The minister in fact had the authority to appoint and/or discharge a Board member of the SABC. Article 15(3) of the Act of 1936 dictates that the Postmaster-General, in collaboration with the minister under whom the SABC resorts, had the authority to suspend the corporation’s broadcasting license.⁸⁵ If the SABC failed to meet its broadcasting objectives, the service could be taken over by the state. With regard to television, Article 12 of Act 22 stipulated that the introduction of a television service had to be approved by the Governor-General/State President, in effect, the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs.⁸⁶ During the course of its 80-year existence the public utility had often faced

⁷⁹ Gideon Roos, *Die Uitsaaiwese in Diens van Ons Samelewing*, (Johannesburg: Suid-Afrikaanse Uitsaaikorporasie, 1957), p. 2.

⁸⁰ Including the BBC.

⁸¹ The SABC had its own independent Governing Board. According to Article 3(3), the Board had no responsibilities towards the ruling party or executive authority.

⁸² *An Act to Provide Control of Broadcasting within the Union, to Establish the South African Broadcasting Corporation, to Define its Function, Powers and Duties, to Amend further the Radio Act, 1928, and to Provide for Other Incidental Matters*, Statutes of the Union of South Africa 22 (1936), p. 202.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

⁸⁴ The change of departments will be explained below.

⁸⁵ *An Act to Provide Control of Broadcasting within the Union, to Establish the South African Broadcasting Corporation, to Define its Function, Powers and Duties, to Amend further the Radio Act, 1928, and to Provide for Other Incidental Matters*, Statutes of the Union of South Africa 22 (1936), p. 211.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

criticism from civil society and opposition parties that it has acted as a political mouthpiece for a ruling party, whether the United Party, National Party or the African National Congress. The Second World War (1939-1945) serves as an exemplar of this situation.

Inter Arma Silent Leges Era, 1939-1945

On 3 September 1939 the South African Press Association (SAPA)⁸⁷ received notification (at 10:45 am) that Britain and its allies may declare war on the Axis powers.⁸⁸ A programme plan, previously prepared for such an occurrence, was immediately put into action. As a result, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's declaration of war (12:15 pm) was recorded and broadcast to the South African public by the SABC.⁸⁹ The public broadcaster's Board immediately offered their support for the Union's war effort: "The board considered it their duty to cooperate on any means necessary to help government bring the struggle to a favourable conclusion."⁹⁰ Upon request from the state, a daily slot was granted to the Government Information Officer to communicate and reflect on the status of the war.⁹¹ Speeches by political parties were still prohibited; however, propaganda in support of the war effort was permitted. Future Director-General of the SABC, Gideon Roos, stated: "*Inter arma silent leges*,"⁹² and in [periods of] war or emergencies the broadcasting service, by nature, has to temporarily abandon its traditional impartiality."⁹³ The SABC's support of the Union's involvement (under Smuts and the UP) in the Second World War in collaboration with Great Britain was met with intense resistance from Afrikaner nationalists (such as J.B.M Hertzog and D.F. Malan).⁹⁴ As a safety precaution, subsidiary radio broadcasts were suspended for the duration of the war, including from studios located in Bloemfontein and Stellenbosch.⁹⁵ Examples of programmes broadcast that promoted the war included *The Shadow of the Swastika*, *We Fight On*, *Die Volkere Sing*, *Land Van Ons Vaders* and *Uit Eie Krag*.⁹⁶

⁸⁷ SAPA (Suid-Afrikaanse Persvereniging in Afrikaans), established in 1938 by major newspapers, was a non-governmental organisation which facilitated the circulation of national and international news.

⁸⁸ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1939, p. 3.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁹¹ The source did not specify the length.

⁹² Latin Phrase for "For [among] in times of arms, the laws fall mute".

⁹³ Gideon Roos, *Die Uitsaaiwese in Diens van Ons Samelewing*, (Johannesburg: South African Broadcasting Corporation, 1957), p. 9.

⁹⁴ Discussed in Chapter One.

⁹⁵ Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC* (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 27.

⁹⁶ The Announcer, Gideon Roos, would become Director-General of the Corporation.

In 1940 the SABC, in collaboration with the Department of Native Affairs, experimentally broadcast news programmes in three black languages: Xhosa, Zulu and Sotho.⁹⁷ However, the introduction of a fuller service aimed at the black population was unhurried as the SABC maintained that further experimentation was required. In 1942 the Board yet again discussed the introduction of a local television service.⁹⁸ It was considered that a TV service could be established if future profits are allocated to such a procedure. The decision was postponed, however, because of the Second World War. From 1939-1945 the SABC experienced considerable financial growth. The expansion can be attributed to a number of reasons, including the public's interest in the war, the economic empowerment of the Afrikaner and, significantly, the technical development of the "A and B Services". For example, by the end of 1941, £211 612 was allocated to the Development Fund of the SABC and utilised to acquire modern broadcasting equipment, develop local talent and to enhance broadcast techniques.⁹⁹ Table 9 indicates the growth of the SABC by showing the number of listener licences issued, the revenue generated and profits accrued during 1939-1945.

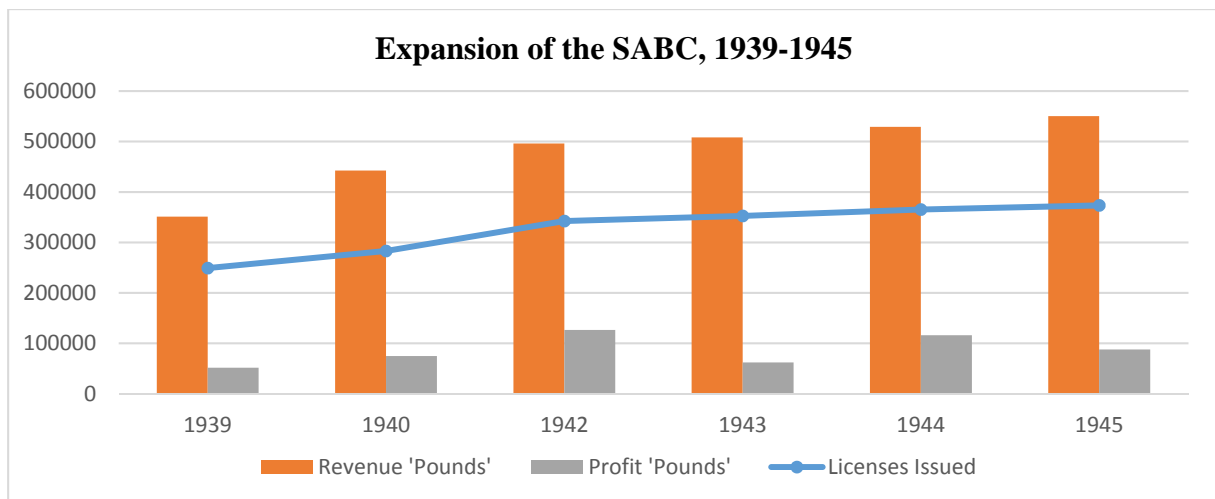
Table 9: Expansion of the SABC during the Second World War, 1939-1945¹⁰⁰			
Year*	Licenses Issued by Year	Revenue '£'	Profit '£'
1939	249 199	351 151	51 696
1940	283 119	442 471	74 614
1942	342 497	496 112	126 563
1943	352 654	508 093	62 138
1944	365 244	528 987	115 997
1945	373 411	550 207	87 870

⁹⁷ The service was provided as a war measure by means of special closed-circuit broadcasts to black compounds. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1942, p. 7.

⁹⁸ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1942, p. 15.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1939-1945.



(*1941 is intentionally excluded from the table as that year's revenue could not be traced. Licenses issued by 1941 numbered 311 051)

Commercial Broadcasting, 1945-1958

In 1945 the Board became increasingly alarmed at the prospect that future profits could reach a financial ceiling¹⁰¹ as broadcasting expenditure (salaries and equipment) continued to increase. For example, on 31 December 1944 the SABC's staff consisted of 487 employees, a 25% increase since 1939. The licenses issued in 1945 amounted to 8 167 as compared to 36 285 issued in 1939.¹⁰² An increase of listener licenses fees could have been initiated as a possible strategy; however the SABC introduced a much more profitable option, commercial broadcasting.¹⁰³ The Board maintained that the introduction of commercial broadcasting would produce quality programming, adequate salaries for broadcast staff, encourage the development of local talent and provide additional programming for the listener at no extra cost. Director-General Caprara investigated the possible prospects of local commercial broadcasting (known as the C-service) by observing broadcasts in Australia and New Zealand.¹⁰⁴ After the government approved the introduction of commercial broadcasting and newly elected Director-General, Gideon Roos, had investigated broadcasting in Europe and the Americas in 1948, the SABC ultimately launched Springbok Radio (alternatively known as the

¹⁰¹ Evident from Table 7 (1945 compared to 1944 and 1942).

¹⁰² SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1944, p. 22. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Report (T.G.F. Rhodes): "Broadcasting before the SABC was created", 21 September 1956, (n.p).

¹⁰³ Commercial broadcasting refers to a service that collects its revenue by means of advertisements rather than licenses.

¹⁰⁴ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1946, p. 6.

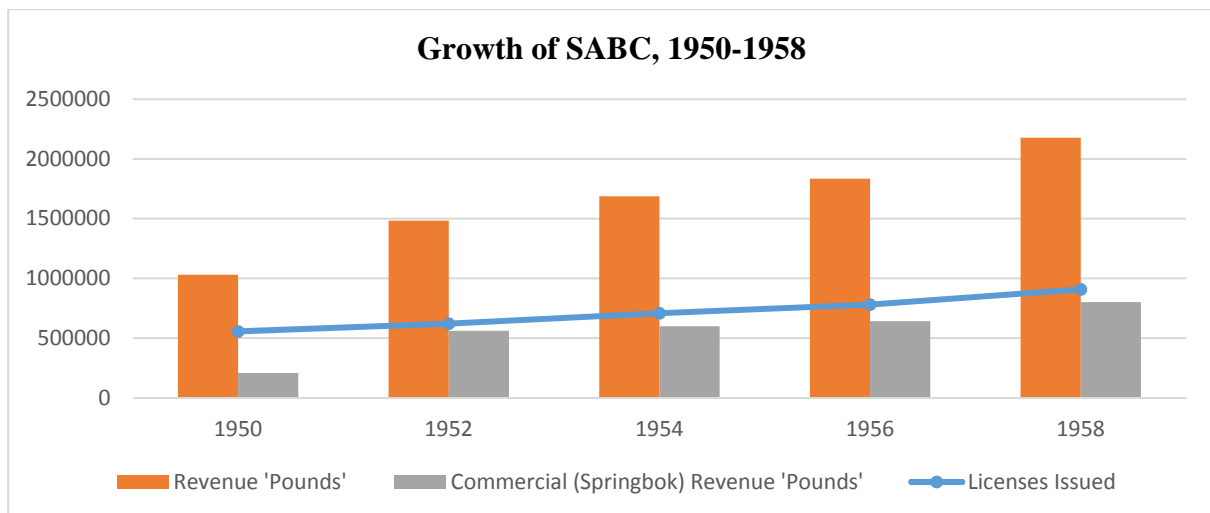
C-service) on 1 May 1950.¹⁰⁵ The most popular programmes were comedies (*Taxi*), record releases (*Radio Juke Box*), sport programmes, request programmes, quiz programmes and Eric Egan's breakfast show. By December 1951 the SABC employed 1 005 staff members, the station's transmitters increased from 3 in the Transvaal to 11 transmitters that broadcast to all densely populated areas in South Africa, approximately 600 000 licenses were issued, whilst the annual excess of income over expenditure amounted to £184 916 (compared to £87 870 in 1945).¹⁰⁶ Springbok Radio broadcast for 55 years until its dissolution on 31 December 1985. The dissolution was a direct result of the introduction of television broadcasts in 1976. Companies preferred advertising through the television medium and, as such, Springbok Radio's service was rendered obsolete. Table 10 shows the growth of the SABC (1950-1958) after the introduction of South Africa's commercial radio service.

Table 10:¹⁰⁷ Growth of the SABC after the Introduction of Springbok Radio, 1950-1958			
Year	Licenses Issued	Revenue '£'	Commercial (Springbok) Revenue '£'
1950	554 863	1 029 056	205 439
1952	620 085	1 482 313	559 234
1954	707 622	1 685 412	597 246
1956	779 428	1 832 965	640 180
1958	907 417	2 177 218	799 284

¹⁰⁵ 425 advertising contracts were signed within the first year. Cameron McClure managed Springbok Radio. 30% of all programmes were produced by South African citizens by 1951. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1950, p. 26.

¹⁰⁶ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1951, p. 37. Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC* (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 33. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1951, p. 5. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1945, p. 38.

¹⁰⁷ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1950-1958.



P.J. Meyer, VHF-FM Transmissions¹⁰⁸ and Radio Bantu,¹⁰⁹ 1959-1969

P.J. (Piet) Meyer, Chair of the Afrikaner Broederbond, was elected as the SABC's Chair of the Board of Governors in 1959.¹¹⁰ Meyer's selection by Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, Dr Albert Hertzog, was not without contention. Meyer recollects;

"My appointment as Chair of the SABC on 1 August 1959 was greeted with a wild and relentless storm of words against myself by the [more liberal] English press... as frontrunner of the attacks, this newspaper [*Sunday Times*] wrote: 'Dr P.J. Meyer, leading Broederbonder, once an admirer of Hitler's Nazi regime, and now one of Dr Verwoerd's right-hand men, has been given supreme control of the SABC.'"¹¹¹

Notwithstanding, Piet Meyer, would play a significant role in introducing television to the South African public, as will be explained. Though commercial radio broadcasts contributed to the SABC's revenue, expenditures simultaneously increased as a result of an increase in staff salaries and lands purchased in Auckland¹¹² and Brixton.¹¹³ As a response, Meyer enforced the reorganisation of the SABC's management configuration with the "final objective of ensuring effective performance and control of its branches."¹¹⁴ The management of the SABC was divided into five departments, i.e. External (Foreign) and Commercial Services, Administration,

¹⁰⁸ FM is radio broadcasting using frequency modulation (FM) technology. It provides high-fidelity sound regarded superior to AM transmissions. FM stations use Very High Frequencies (VHF) in their broadcasts.

¹⁰⁹ Generic term for radio broadcasts aimed at black South Africans.

¹¹⁰ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1959, p. 3.

¹¹¹ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie vér genoeg nie: 'n Persoonlike rekenskap van vyftig jaar georganiseerde Afrikanerskap* (Johannesburg: Perskor, 1984), p. 103.

¹¹² This site would be reserved for the SABC's new and larger headquarters.

¹¹³ The VHF-FM Albert-Hertzog tower would be constructed on this property.

¹¹⁴ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1960, p. 8.

Finance, Planning and Development, and Programmes.¹¹⁵ With reorganisation came the introduction of a staff training system, the finance department was enlarged and statistical analysis was intensified.¹¹⁶ The rationalisation of the SABC centralised control of the Corporation's operations. According to Graham Hayman and Ruth Tomaselli, the Director-General Gideon Roos¹¹⁷ was forced out of operations by Meyer's deployed reorganisation.¹¹⁸ Fellow Broederbonders, such as Jan Swanepoel and Douglas Fuchs, had been promoted to fulfil roles previously managed by Roos. The External and Commercial Service (a non-significant area, as FM services were yet to be introduced) was managed by Roos; however his power had been severely reduced, which ultimately led to his resignation on 31 May 1961.¹¹⁹



Illustration 8: P.J. Meyer – Chairperson of the SABC from 1959-1981¹²⁰

Meyer accumulated executive power as the position of Director-General was abolished. Under Meyer's executive control, the SABC's programme policy differed from Roos's. Roos maintained:

“In a system like this, the broadcaster's stance has to be objective and unbiased in cases of a polemic [political] nature. It does not mean, however, that all controversies should be ignored.”¹²¹

¹¹⁵ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1960, p. 8.

¹¹⁶ Ruth Tomaselli, Keyan Tomaselli & Johan Muller, *Currents of Power: State Broadcasting in South Africa*, (Bellville: Anthropos, 1989), p. 62.

¹¹⁷ The Director-General originally had the last word on all operations.

¹¹⁸ Ruth Tomaselli, Keyan Tomaselli & Johan Muller, *Currents of Power: State Broadcasting in South Africa*, (Bellville: Anthropos, 1989), p. 62.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1959, p. 3.

¹²¹ Gideon Roos, *Die Uitsaaiwese in Diens van Ons Samelewing*, (Johannesburg: South African Broadcasting Corporation, 1957), p. 8.

Under Roos, the SABC allocated programme time for political discussions between South Africa's two white communities. Meyer, in line with the aims of state,¹²² prohibited such discussions in order to enhance the relationship between the Afrikaner and English-speaking whites. This resulted in the exodus of a number of senior staff members. The substantial reduction in staff neutralised the increase of salary expenditure. Reorganisation, coupled with the raising of salaries, increased broadcasting productivity.

After the appointment of Dr P.J. Meyer the SABC immediately endeavoured to further expand broadcasting in South Africa to cater for the needs of rural and black listeners.¹²³ Most of the broadcasting transmitters (medium-wave frequency system) were located near the larger towns in South Africa, leaving country listeners dissatisfied with the radio service provided. As a result, the SABC scheduled to establish a VHF-FM system in South Africa when the cheaper transistorised, portable battery-operated FM receiver (radio) was invented in the late 1950s, and the government approved the Corporation's proposal in 1960.¹²⁴ The Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, Dr Albert Hertzog, announced the introduction of the new broadcasting system on 6 December 1960.¹²⁵ From 1960 to 1967 127 transmitting stations and over 500 transmitters¹²⁶ were constructed in South Africa, including the Albert Hertzog FM Tower¹²⁷ in Brixton, Johannesburg.¹²⁸ The majority of South Africans then gained access to the SABC's broadcasting service. The VHF-FM ("Special FM Service") broadcasting system was utilised by Radio South Africa¹²⁹ and allowed the building of South Africa's first regional radio broadcasting stations such as Radio Highveld, Radio Good Hope and Radio Port Natal.¹³⁰

¹²² Discussed in Chapter Two.

¹²³ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1959, p. 3-4.

¹²⁴ Portable radios (vacuum tube) were made before transistor radios, but they consumed more power (requiring several large batteries), were bulky and much more fragile. Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC* (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 39.

¹²⁵ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1960, p. 6.

¹²⁶ Compared to 18 transmitters at the end of the Second World War. Government provided the SABC with loans to establish the VHF-FM system – approximately R40 million in total.

¹²⁷ Completed in September 1962, it was the tallest structure in Africa.

¹²⁸ Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC* (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 39.

¹²⁹ National radio broadcast using FM transmission, established on 1 September 1964.

¹³⁰ Radio Highveld: Also inaugurated on 1 September 1964, covering Pretoria and the Witwatersrand. Radio Good Hope was established on 1 July 1965 to cover the Cape. Radio Port Natal was inaugurated on 1 May 1967 to provide a service for Natal. The name was later changed to East Coast Radio. All the new FM stations broadcast commercials. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1964, p. 29. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1965, p. 7. Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 50.

On 8 August 1952 the SABC initiated experimental broadcasts known as the Rediffusion Service aimed at South Africa's black communities.¹³¹ The first broadcasts were received in the black township, Orlando (Johannesburg), in three native languages: Xhosa, Southern Sotho and Zulu. The Rediffusion Service served a dual purpose: to provide entertainment in the black communities' households, thus contributing "towards the prevention of crime;"¹³² secondly, the SABC argued that the service could be utilised as an educational medium. Within the first year 5 650 black citizens subscribed to the service, exceeding initial estimates.¹³³ As a result, the service was expanded to Orlando's neighbouring townships Jabavu, Dube, Mofolo and Zondi by 1959.¹³⁴ The Rediffusion Service would last until its dissolution in 1967.¹³⁵ In 1959, after appointing P.J. Meyer as Chairman, the Board endeavoured to establish a national black Service. On 1 January 1960 Radio Bantu was established initially broadcasting in Xhosa, Zulu and South Sotho over the medium-wave frequency transmitters of the Afrikaans and English services.¹³⁶ By 1969 seven black radio services had been introduced on the VHF-FM transmitters, including Radio Zulu (1962), Radio SeSotho (1962), Radio Setswana (1962), Radio Lebowa (1962), Radio Tsonga (1965), Radio Venda (1965) and Radio Xhosa (1967). A country-wide survey undertaken by the SABC indicated that an estimated 2 million people listened to Radio Bantu in 1966.¹³⁷ The expansion of the black service transpired simultaneously with the implementation of legislation confirming the NP's dedication to 'separate development' in South Africa. In 1951 the Bantu Authorities Act was passed, establishing 'homelands' allocated to the country's black ethnic groups. Under Hendrik Verwoerd's premiership, the Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959 was passed – enabling homelands to establish themselves as quasi-independent, self-governing 'states'. The Black Homelands Citizenship Act of 1970 formally designated blacks, irrespective of whether they lived in other parts of South Africa, as citizens of these homelands.¹³⁸ The SABC expanded its

¹³¹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1952, p. 36.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1953, p. 32.

¹³⁴ It was estimated that 60 000 citizens listened to the service in these townships; 12 443 households (averaging five people each) subscribed for the service. Receiving the Rediffusion Service differed from the conventional system (licenses). The programmes were provided by the SABC, but Orlando Rediffusion Co (Pty) Ltd distributed the service to households that subscribed to the service. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1955, p. 16.

¹³⁵ This was due to the increase of black radio broadcasts made with FM transmissions.

¹³⁶ Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC* (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 75.

¹³⁷ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1966, p. 36.

¹³⁸ Pierre E.J. Brooks & Christiaan J. Thomas, "Statutory background to the economic development of the black homelands and peripheral areas in South Africa", *The Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern*

services to South West Africa in 1969 and broadcast in Windhoek and Oshakati in Ovambo, Damara and Herero.¹³⁹ The Treaty of Versailles had declared South West Africa (now Namibia) a League of Nations Class C Mandate territory after the First World War, consequently granting South Africa the responsibility to administer the territory's affairs. After the Second World War Jan Smuts objected to South West Africa becoming a United Nation's Trust Territory and subsequently an independent country. Instead, South Africa wished to incorporate the territory as a fifth province of the Union in 1946. These ambitions never materialised. However, the amendment of the South West Africa Affairs Act in 1949 gave representation to South West African whites in South Africa's Parliament.¹⁴⁰ Apartheid laws extended to South West Africa, including implementation of South African authorities' policies of separate development and homeland dispensation for different ethnic groups. In accordance with the "Odendaal Commission/Plan", 10 Bantustans, similar to those found in South Africa, were established.¹⁴¹ Similar to all SABC services, the programmes broadcast in South West Africa were designed not only for entertainment purposes, but to "guide, to instruct."¹⁴²

As stated, the FM network had to be established, developed and utilised to facilitate the introduction and expansion of local TV services.¹⁴³ The reason is that FM masts provided additional space for TV aerials and most of the transmission sites could accommodate and be utilised as TV stations. Meyer, as a result, estimated that R8 million¹⁴⁴ could be saved in expenditure if a TV service were to commence in South Africa.¹⁴⁵ Tables 11 and 12 show the growth of the SABC during 1960-1969; the figures indicate how the expansion of the

Africa, 10 (1977), p. 133-134. Brian H. King & Brent McCusker, "Environment and Development in the Former South African Bantustans", *The Geographical Journal* 173 (2007), p. 7-9.

¹³⁹ These black programmes were subsidised by the state. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1969, p. 12.

¹⁴⁰ John Dugard, *The South West Africa/ Namibia Dispute: Documents and Scholarly Writings on the Controversy between South Africa and the United Nations*, (California: University of California Press, 1973), p. 122-125.

¹⁴¹ Reinhart Kössler, "From Reserve to Homeland: Local Identities and South African Policy in Southern Namibia", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 26 (2000), p. 456.

¹⁴² SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1969, "Programme Services for the Native Peoples of South West Africa".

¹⁴³ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: "Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie", 4 November 1970, p. 1.

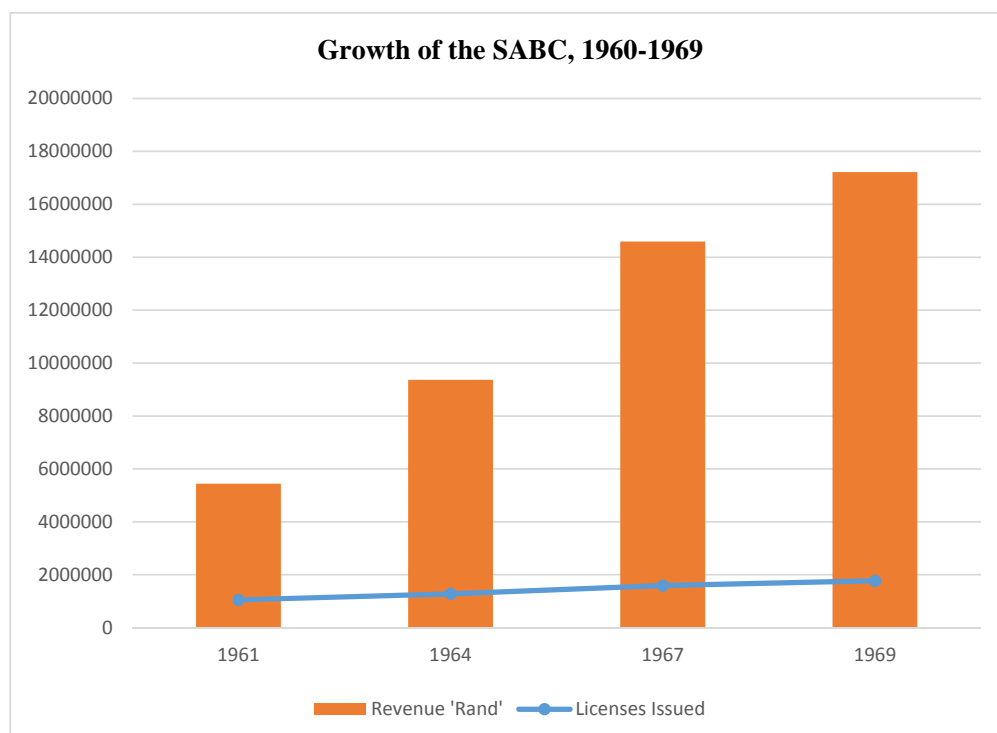
¹⁴⁴ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R518 million.

¹⁴⁵ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: "Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie", 4 November 1970, p. 1.

Corporation placed the SABC on a sufficiently stable financial and technical footing [experience in broadcasting] to introduce a television service in South Africa.¹⁴⁶

Table 11:¹⁴⁷ Growth of the SABC since the Introduction of FM Transmission and the Black Radio Broadcasting Services, 1960-1969

Year	Licenses Issued	Revenue 'R'
1961	1 050 551	5 438 582
1964	1 279 986	9 364 178
1967	1 588 739	14 591 904
1969	1 770 486	17 215 285

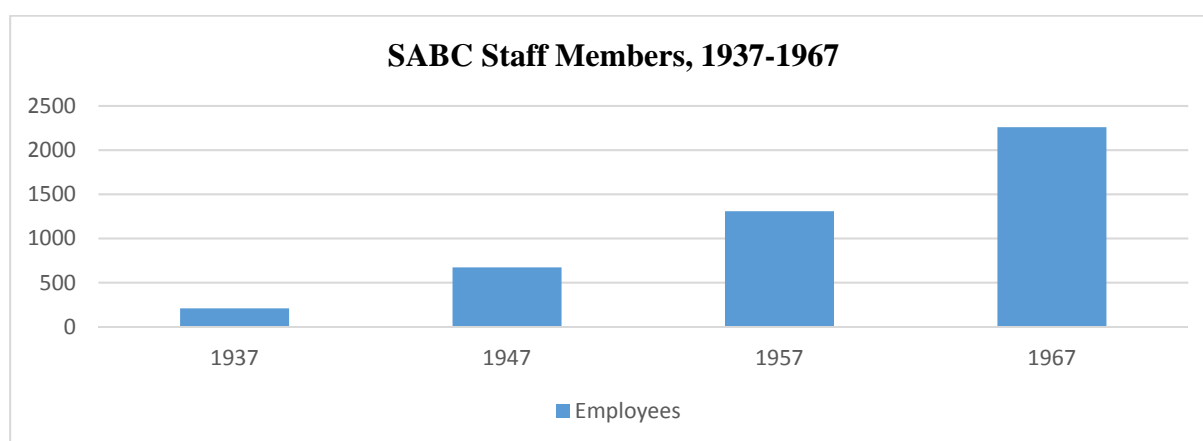


¹⁴⁶ 1969 was the year that the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, Matthys van Rensburg, officially commissioned an inquiry into the introduction of a television service.

¹⁴⁷ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1961-1969.

Table 12:¹⁴⁸ The Growth of Staff in the SABC, 1937-1967 (End of Financial Year: March)

Year	Staff Members
1937	209
1947	672
1957	1 308
1967	2 260



Politics and Television

The Broadcasting Act of 1936 stipulated that the introduction of TV was a parliamentary matter. In 1960 Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd declared that television would not be introduced in South Africa. Apart from socio-political reasons, Verwoerd argued that technical factors were to blame, for example, he stated that colour TV had yet to be effectively developed.¹⁴⁹ The official stance adopted by the SABC, as determined by Act 22 of 1936, was that the introduction of a local television service should continuously remain an objective. The SABC generally considered that the technological development of South African radio, i.e. frequency modulation broadcasting, was the final technical step necessary to consider before the implementation of TV services.¹⁵⁰ Whilst the decision remained prerogative of the government, however, the SABC refrained from public debate. Throughout the 1960s the SABC explored the issue by means of attending international conferences¹⁵¹ and launching special

¹⁴⁸ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1937-1967.

¹⁴⁹ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: "Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie", 4 November 1970, p. 1.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ The source did not specify which ones.

investigations in 1962, 1965, 1967 and 1969.¹⁵² Regardless of these investigations, Cabinet's approval was still required.

The National Party's Objections to Television

The figure generally perceived as the sternest opponent of the introduction of television to South Africa was the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, Dr Albert Hertzog ("Dr No"),¹⁵³ responsible for overseeing South African broadcasting from 1958 to 1968. Son of former Prime Minister and founder of the National Party, J.B.M. Hertzog, Albert Hertzog (former Minister of Health [1954-1958]) feared that television (and particularly imported films) would influence the public by depicting, among other things, miscegenation. Furthermore, Hertzog stated that the impact of television could result in black South Africans questioning their socio-economic and political position in the country and that the service was deemed to threaten the very nature of the Afrikaner household:

"When television is introduced into a home and the children are continually seeing acts of violence, crime, sex crimes and immorality, it must of necessity have an adverse effect on those children."¹⁵⁴

During the 1966 national elections the United Party (UP)¹⁵⁵ campaigned for the introduction of television services in South Africa. Naturally, right-wing NP members (headed by Minister Albert Hertzog) strongly opposed the UP's objective. During the election campaign the NP summarised the motives for the objection of TV after addressing the following question:

"Why is the UP so serious about introducing Television in South Africa – and this whilst the Government is accused by the same UP of using the radio service for National Party propaganda?"¹⁵⁶

Television was deemed an influential communication medium threatening the traditional, nationalistic inclinations of conservative Afrikanerdom and, as such, the NP's control of South

¹⁵² SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: "Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie", 4 November 1970, p. 1.

¹⁵³ Bernard Cros, "Why South Africa's Television is Only Twenty Years Old: Debating Civilisation, 1958-1969", *Alizés: Revue Angliciste de La Réunion* 12 (1996), p. 118.

¹⁵⁴ Statement made by Albert Hertzog, *Hansard*, Assembly Debates, 23 May 1963, as quoted by Bernard Cros, "Why South Africa's Television is Only Twenty Years Old: Debating Civilisation, 1958-1969", *Alizés: Revue Angliciste de La Réunion* 12 (1996), p. 120.

¹⁵⁵ Official opposition to the National Party. Their slogan during the 1966 campaign: "Want TV? Vote UP!"

¹⁵⁶ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Correspondence from J.A. Marais (NP Parliamentarian) with an attached memorandum: "Die Verenigde Party en Televisie deur Jaap Marais, LV.", 25 April 1966, p. 1.

Africa. The paramount concern was a possible inability to regulate the visual material projected by television, particularly from foreign producers. Television, according to the NP, promoted racial integration, would dismantle the sense of identity of South Africa's ethnic groups and jeopardise the policy of separate development. Member of Parliament and far-right politician Jaap Marais stated that these considerations provided the "explanation for the UP's strange behaviour" regarding television.¹⁵⁷ He continued by quoting the famous English poet and social commentator, T.S. Eliot:

"Television is a power that breaks the spiritual individuality and the individual thoughts of people and nations to the ground – a power so strong that attacks the true core of social orders."¹⁵⁸

Right-wing NP members regarded television as a "ubiquitous and omnipotent hypnotist" through which a consumer loses his/her critical ability.¹⁵⁹ The socio-political risks involved were considered too great in relation to the financial costs of establishing a local network. These NP members argued that the basic policy of effective governance was to govern according to the religion and traditional conventions of the *volk*. TV was thought to be an obvious and "hostile strategy" to undermine apartheid.¹⁶⁰

Contributing to the NP's delay to establish a local TV service was the sense of novelty surrounding the contentious communication medium in South Africa. By 1966 a level of uncertainty was evident in television industries throughout the world with regard to techniques and standards. For example, the USA and Britain broadcast on an NTSC system, Germany utilised the PAL system, and France and Russia the SECAM system.¹⁶¹ The NP argued that these states are desirous of expanding their respective systems to foreign countries as these countries' television transmitters could be fed with programmes that promoted their own

¹⁵⁷ Jaap Marais discussed the contentious subject during the election campaign. Marais would leave the NP in 1969 after BJ Vorster authorised the presence of Maori players and spectators during the New Zealand rugby tour in 1970. He led the Herstigte Nasionale Party from 1977-2000. SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Correspondence from J.A. Marais (NP Parliamentarian) with an attached memorandum: "Die Verenigde Party en Televisie deur Jaap Marais, LV.", 25 April 1966, p. 1.

¹⁵⁸ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Correspondence from J.A. Marais (NP Parliamentarian) with an attached memorandum: "Die Verenigde Party en Televisie deur Jaap Marais, LV.", 25 April 1966, p. 6.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ NTSC: National Television System Committee. It displays 60 half-frames per second and each frame contains 525 lines. PAL: Phase Alternating Line. It displays 50 half-frames per second and each frame contains 625 lines. The PAL system is a variation of the SECAM system. SECAM: Sequential Colour with Memory. It displays 50 half-frames per second and each frame contains 625 lines. It was developed in France. SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Correspondence from J.A. Marais (NP Parliamentarian) with an attached memorandum: "Die Verenigde Party en Televisie deur Jaap Marais, LV.", 25 April 1966, p. 2.

interests. Countries without television would consequently be placed under immense pressure to adopt a particular system. According to the NP, African states that succumbed to such pressures and established a national TV service could not economically afford – much less utilise – a national service.¹⁶²

In 1966 the NP calculated that capital valued at approximately R60 million¹⁶³ would be required to establish a local black-and-white TV service, plus an annual expenditure of R50 million¹⁶⁴ to maintain that service.¹⁶⁵ Colour TV broadcasts, according to a study conducted by H.B.C Casimir, would prove to be six times as expensive.¹⁶⁶ Since South Africa was an industrialised and aspirational Westernised country, the NP maintained that if a TV service was to be established, its quality had to be equivalent to British standards. However, as with the Afrikaans film industry, the nature of the local market was a cause for concern. The NP government was fully aware, because of South Africa's socio-economic make-up, that the maintenance and expansion of the service was dependent on white consumers (approximately 700 000 families in the late 1960s).¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, the National Party argued that the implementation of TV would add R200¹⁶⁸ to these white families' annual living expenses in the form of taxation and retail prices.¹⁶⁹ Geographical issues were continuously raised: "You cannot compare this country to Britain. We nearly have a half million square miles and the introduction of television would cost this country, with its small [white] population, a

¹⁶² African states that introduced national TV services before 1966 included Nigeria (1959), Egypt (1960), Congo, Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe [1961]) (1962), Morocco (1962), Gabon (1963), Cote d'Ivoire (1963), Kenya (1963), Sierra Leone (1963), Sudan (1963), Uganda (1963), Ethiopia (1964) and Ghana (1965). Nwulu Nnamdi I., Adekanbi Adeyemi, Oranugo Tochukwu & Adewale Yemi, "Television broadcasting in Africa: Pioneering milestones", Paper Presented at Telecommunications Conference (HISTELCON): Second IEEE Region 8 Conference on the History of Broadcasting, Madrid, 2010, <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/stamp/stamp.jsp?tp=&arnumber=5735315&tag=1>. SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Correspondence from J.A. Marais (NP Parliamentarian) with an attached memorandum: "Die Verenigde Party en Televisie deur Jaap Marais, LV.", 25 April 1966, p. 2.

¹⁶³ Value in 2016 taking inflation into account: R 4, 3 billion.

¹⁶⁴ Value in 2016 taking inflation into account: R 3, 6 billion.

¹⁶⁵ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Correspondence from J.A. Marais (NP Parliamentarian) with an attached memorandum: "Die Verenigde Party en Televisie deur Jaap Marais, LV.", 25 April 1966, p. 3.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁶⁷ Considering that maintaining the service would cost South Africa R300 million a year. SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Correspondence from J.A. Marais (NP Parliamentarian) with an attached memorandum: "Die Verenigde Party en Televisie deur Jaap Marais, LV.", 25 April 1966, p. 5.

¹⁶⁸ Approximately R14 300 in 2016.

¹⁶⁹ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Correspondence from J.A. Marais (NP Parliamentarian) with an attached memorandum: "Die Verenigde Party en Televisie deur Jaap Marais, LV.", 25 April 1966, p. 5.

fortune.”¹⁷⁰ The government realised that, as with Springbok Radio, income could be generated by means of advertising revenue, yet argued that only the largest franchises could afford advertising expenses.¹⁷¹ Smaller enterprises could suffer financial losses, thus affecting the economy. Unfortunately, the government document did not specify to what degree these businesses could suffer financially.

A Political Turning Point

However, after the assassination of Hendrik Verwoerd in September 1966 and the consequent inauguration of B.J. Vorster as Prime Minister, the prospects of introducing a television service reached a turning point. Two different wings of political thought manifested within the ranks of the National Party, generally termed as a struggle between the “*Verkrampes*” (arch-conservatives) and the “*Verligtes*” (progressive nationalists).¹⁷² *Verkrampes* strongly opposed the introduction of television and their movement was spearheaded by the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs (later Telecommunications), Albert Hertzog, and Chairperson of the SABC, Piet Meyer (appointed as Chair by Hertzog). *Verligtes*, who perceived that Afrikaner adaptation to the global spectrum was a necessity to guarantee the continuity of white political domination,¹⁷³ were led by the Minister of Justice B.J. Vorster and supported by figures such as Gert Claassen (Natal Provincial Council) and Nico Malan (Administrator of the Cape Province).¹⁷⁴ Succeeding Verwoerd as Prime Minister, Vorster’s appointment led to the *Verligte* political body gaining prominence.¹⁷⁵ As such, policies were introduced which consequently infuriated the NP’s far-right members. For example, in 1968, Vorster stated that multiracial foreign sports teams would be permitted to travel in South Africa.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, Vorster adopted a foreign policy which aimed to strengthen diplomatic relations with other African countries (a topic discussed in the next chapter).

¹⁷⁰ Van der Merwe, *Debatte van die Volksraad* (Hansard), *Tweede sitting – Tweede Parlement*, (Elsiesrivier: Nasionale Handeldrukkery Beperk, 22 May 1963), p. 6839.

¹⁷¹ In 1966 TV broadcasts cost R10 000 per hour in Britain (ITV). Six minutes were granted for advertisements within each hour.

¹⁷² Terms coined by academic, Willem de Klerk. Hermann Giliomee, “‘Broedertwis’: Intra-Afrikaner Conflicts in the Transition from Apartheid”, *African Affairs* 91 (1992), p. 343.

¹⁷³ This adaptation would attract the support of the generally more liberal English-speaking white South Africans.

¹⁷⁴ Carin Bevan, *Putting Up Screens: A history of Television in South Africa, 1929-1976*, (Unpublished Magister Hereditatis Culturaeque Scientia [MHCS], University of Pretoria, 2008), p. 106.

¹⁷⁵ Vorster was initially supported by both factions within the NP.

¹⁷⁶ Ivor Wilkins & Hans Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond*, (Jeppesstown: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2012), p. 185.

Tensions arose within the NP and Vorster's working relationship with Albert Hertzog deteriorated as a result. In February 1968 Hertzog was removed as Minister of Posts and Telecommunications and succeeded by the more progressive Matthys (Basie) van Rensburg.¹⁷⁷ After being removed from Cabinet in August 1968, Hertzog, along with a few other prominent NP members, formed the ultra-conservative *Herstigte Nasionale Party* [Re-established National Party] (HNP) in 1969.¹⁷⁸ Piet Meyer, despite his dissatisfaction with the political policies adopted, offered his support for the NP and Vorster. Both Vorster and Meyer (acting as Chair) were Broederbonders, an organisation devoted to sustaining the National Party and its policies. Vorster confronted Meyer to choose between the policies of the *Verkrampies* or the National Party during an annual conference in 1968.¹⁷⁹ Meyer consequently elected to support the ambitions of the NP. Figures of a poll conducted by *The Cape Times* in 1969 demonstrated that the majority of Afrikaners and English South Africans were in favour of television (59% and 75% respectively).¹⁸⁰ The emergence of the Afrikaner middle-class through urbanisation and subsequent integration with the more liberal English communities are generally regarded as the reasons for the *volk's* increased approval of political and technological advancements, including television.¹⁸¹

Satellite Development, the Moon landing and the Question of Modernity

Satellite television was officially launched in 1962, when the Telstar satellite relayed broadcasts from Europe to North America (viewed by over 100 million people).¹⁸² By 1967 a network of Telstar satellites was orbiting the globe that could distribute signals across the Americas, Europe, Asia and, most significantly, Africa. A receiving station was required if a country wished to receive TV signals. However, after the invention of the personal satellite

¹⁷⁷ Ivor Wilkins & Hans Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond*, (Jeppestown: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2012), p. 183. Carin Bevan, *Putting Up Screens: A history of Television in South Africa, 1929-1976*, (Unpublished MHCS, University of Pretoria, 2008), p. 107.

¹⁷⁸ The Albert Hertzog Tower in Johannesburg was later renamed the Brixton Tower and then the Sentech Tower. Ivor Wilkins & Hans Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond*, (Jeppestown: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2012), p. 184-185.

¹⁷⁹ Dan O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The Apartheid State and the Politics of the National Party, 1948-1994*, (Randburg, Ohio University Press, 1996), p. 162.

¹⁸⁰ From the *Cape Times*, 17 March 1969, statistics used in Bernard Cros, "Why South Africa's Television is Only Twenty Years Old: Debating Civilisation, 1958-1969", *Alizés: Revue Angliciste de La Réunion* 12 (1996), p. 127.

¹⁸¹ Bernard Cros, "Why South Africa's Television is Only Twenty Years Old: Debating Civilisation, 1958-1969", *Alizés: Revue Angliciste de La Réunion* 12 (1996), p. 127.

¹⁸² Launched by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in the USA. *The Science News-Letter*, "Telstar TV Satellite Launched", 82 (1962), p. 37. Christopher Klein, "The Birth of Satellite TV, 50 years Ago", History Channel, 23 July 2012. Accessed: September 1, 2016. <http://www.history.com/news/the-birth-of-satellite-tv-50-years-ago>.

dish,¹⁸³ a base station was no longer a requirement. The fact that users only needed to acquire a television set and a satellite dish was a cause of great concern amongst NP members. Apart from the cinematic film industry, government's ability to regulate imported broadcasting material had been eliminated. This forced the state to consider implementing a local service, thus satisfying the South African demand for TV, whilst simultaneously ensuring that the images received were regulated according to the demands of the government.

The South African public's interest in TV increased when the American spaceflight (Apollo 11) landed the first humans (Neil Armstrong [commander] and Buzz Aldrin [Lunar Module Pilot]) on the moon on 20 July 1969 (20:18 UCT).¹⁸⁴ Approximately six hours later (21 July 1969 [02:56 UCT]), Armstrong would become the first to step on the lunar surface and he uttered the words which marked the technological advancement of humankind: "That's one small step for [a] man, one giant leap for mankind."¹⁸⁵ Though these images were televised across the world, South African listeners had to rely on live radio broadcasts and the press.¹⁸⁶ In retrospect, the technological development of South Africa and the rest of the world – particularly the USA – seemed antithetical, as the global community had sent a man to the moon, while South Africa had yet to introduce a television service. As *The Sunday Times* stated: "The situation is becoming a source of embarrassment for the country."¹⁸⁷ Questions within the country and abroad on the level of South Africa's modernity intensified. Questions on this issue surfaced even before the moon landing, but the National Party responded that such questions were pure propaganda and "sales pitches".¹⁸⁸ Nevertheless, NASA's lunar expedition further isolated South Africa within the Westernised world. On 7 August 1969 *The Cape Argus* announced the results of a poll, which indicated that 96% of its readers thought that TV should be introduced in South Africa.¹⁸⁹ With domestic and foreign pressures intensifying, an

¹⁸³ Received data transmissions and broadcasts at a user's home.

¹⁸⁴ John M. Sarkissian, "On Eagle's Wings: The Parkes Observatory's Support of the Apollo 11 Mission", *Astronomical Society Australia* 18 (2001), p. 287.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ Some South Africans did witness a visual account of the lunar expedition. For example, a South African electronics company, Teledex, in association with *The Rand Daily Mail*, held special screenings. According to Carin Bevan, author of *Putting up screens: a history of television in South Africa, 1929-1976*, the production attracted nearly 70 000 people in its first week.

¹⁸⁷ From the *Sunday Times*, 7 July 1969, quoted in Bernard Cros, "Why South Africa's Television is Only Twenty Years Old: Debating Civilisation, 1958-1969", *Alizés: Revue Angliciste de La Réunion* 12 (1996), p. 128.

¹⁸⁸ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Correspondence from J.A. Marais (NP Parliamentarian) with an attached memorandum: "Die Verenigde Party en Televisie deur Jaap Marais, LV.", 25 April 1966, p. 2.

¹⁸⁹ Carin Bevan, *Putting Up Screens: A history of Television in South Africa, 1929-1976*, (Unpublished MHCS, University of Pretoria, 2008), p. 118.

Afrikaner middle class emerging to prominence; the NP's *Verligte* wing gaining the ascendancy, technological developments advancing and the SABC expanding, the State President J.J. Fouché (through Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Basie van Rensburg) finally appointed the Commission of Research Regarding Matters Relating to Television (Meyer Commission) on 15 December 1969.¹⁹⁰ P.J. Meyer, still acting as Chairperson of the SABC, was appointed head of the Commission.¹⁹¹

The Meyer Commission¹⁹²

The objective of the Commission was to determine whether a television service was socially and economically viable in South Africa, taking the following discussion points into consideration:¹⁹³ the heterogeneity of the country's demographics; the possible moral damage that could be inflicted on the population, especially the youth; the cost of introducing and maintaining the service and its influence on the national economy; the effects of technological developments on a proposed service;¹⁹⁴ selecting a system that was economically and technically most suitable for South Africa;¹⁹⁵ whether South Africa could develop an adequate number of programmes to satisfy the needs of local consumers; and the possible adverse effects of the service on the other media and (most important to this discussion) the South African cinematic film industry.¹⁹⁶ The Commission's conclusions had to meet the following conditions: television must be a statutorily-controlled service; a bilingual service had to be established for the Afrikaans and English-speaking communities and a multilingual service for African groups; the service should not be independently operated from the radio service, i.e. it had to be integrated with the existing radio service; broadcasts had to be of an educational and cultural nature meticulously regulated by the Board, and, crucially, television broadcasts should not be a service that adopts cinematic film or any entertainment industry.¹⁹⁷ The requirement that TV should not be an extension of the cinematic industry re-emphasises the importance of that industry for government. However, it was difficult to predetermine the actual influence of local TV services. The first meeting of the Meyer Commission was

¹⁹⁰ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Correspondence between the SABC and the National Film Board's chairman, F.J. de Villiers, 11 February 1970, p. 21.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² Commission of Research Regarding Matters Relating to Television.

¹⁹³ Ten factors were listed; however, only those most relevant to this thesis will be discussed.

¹⁹⁴ For example, the possible adoption of satellite transmission stations.

¹⁹⁵ For example, the adoption of the PAL, SECAM or NTSC system.

¹⁹⁶ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: "Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie", 4 November 1970, p. vi.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

scheduled for 10 February 1970 during which a questionnaire was designed within the framework of the abovementioned conditions.¹⁹⁸ The questionnaire was distributed to 125 selected institutions deemed appropriate for the investigation (including cultural organisations, the South African Academy for Science and Art, churches, all universities, the English Academy, the film industry [Satbel and Kavaliers, for example], the media, the SABC, agricultural and women's organisations, the advertising industry, state departments, and unions and organisations representing the trade industry).¹⁹⁹ The organisations were invited to reflect on the introduction of a television service in South Africa by submitting a memorandum to be considered and discussed by the Commission.²⁰⁰

Television's Impact on South Africa

After evaluating the received memoranda, the Commission concluded that the introduction of TV could have a positive influence on South African society in terms of the development of the country's religious, cultural, social and economic dimensions. Local TV services were deemed to be potential instruments to counteract the images received from abroad (through satellite broadcasts) to guarantee "the strengthening of [South Africa's] unique spiritual roots, to promote the esteem and love of the unique spiritual heritage, and to carry out and protect the South African lifestyle."²⁰¹ Furthermore, the Commission concluded that TV should be utilised as a learning mechanism within and outside of educational institutions to promote self-development. In retrospect, it could halt the integration of South African communities and protect Afrikaner nationalism and preserve white political domination. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC),²⁰² in collaboration with the SABC, was instructed to research the prospects and possible effects of TV on South African society if and after government were to approve establishing a local service. Examples of the HSRC's research areas included the short-term influence of television on the personal, household, social and formal relationships of Standard 8 boys and girls,²⁰³ and – significant for this discussion – the content and quality

¹⁹⁸ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: "Verslag van die Kommissie van Onderzoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie", 4 November 1970, p. vi.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²⁰⁰ 95 memoranda were received.

²⁰¹ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: "Verslag van die Kommissie van Onderzoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie", 4 November 1970, p. 16.

²⁰² Die Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing (RGN).

²⁰³ The key conclusions that, according to the author of the HRSC, could be drawn was that girls who watched TV had a greater desire to socially engage with a specific person of the opposite sex, and that boys from a higher and lower socio-economic class and girls from the lower socio-economic class who watched TV maintained, to a lesser extent than those who were not exposed to TV, that their behaviour matched the accepted norms of society. P.C. van Zyl, *Die korttermyninvloed van televisie op die persoonlike, Huislike, Sosiale*

of a sample of South African films before the introduction of local television (this will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter).²⁰⁴

Technical Aspects and Financial Considerations

The Commission concluded that the colour television system, PAL, should be used in South Africa.²⁰⁵ The reason was that if a “black-and-white” service was to initiate the service and later be transformed into a colour system (after seven years), the additional expenditure would amount to approximately R24,5 million.²⁰⁶ However, the service adopted had to accommodate black-and-white TV appliances in terms of visual and sound quality. As such, those dependent on cheaper sets – particularly the black communities – could also benefit from the service. The planning of the introduction of South African TV services was divided into two phases. Phase one entailed that one bilingual (Afrikaans and English) channel, known as the “white service”, should be transmitted largely for the white, the Coloured and Asian communities, broadcasting for 37 hours a week.²⁰⁷ Planning for a service aimed at the black communities would then commence. The Commission recommended that one channel should be transmitted to the Witwatersrand in Zulu and Sotho. It was estimated that the capital required for phase one²⁰⁸ was R32 256 000²⁰⁹ and R16 500 000²¹⁰ for the “white service” and the “Bantu service”, respectively.²¹¹ Revenue would be generated by a license fee (R21 per annum p/TV set),²¹² excise and importation tax, sales tax on receiving equipment and advertisements (however, no programme was permitted to be sponsored).²¹³ Phase two included the introduction of a separate service in Afrikaans and English, whilst the “Bantu service” had to be expanded to Durban and a Xhosa service introduced in the Eastern Cape. The Commission suggested that

en Formele verhouding van standerd agt-seuns en -meisies, (Pretoria: Suid-Afrikaanse Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing, Instituut vir Kommunikasie-navorsing, 1979), p. 14.

²⁰⁴ G. Puth, *Die Inhoud en Gehalte van 'n Steekproef Suid-Afrikaanse Rolprente voor die Instelling van Televisie*, (Pretoria: Raad van Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing, Instituut vir Kommunikasie-navorsing, 1976).

²⁰⁵ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: “Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie”, 4 November 1970, p. 21.

²⁰⁶ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R1,6 billion. SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: “Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie”, 4 November 1970, p. 17.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²⁰⁸ A colour TV system that would be introduced after 3-4 years after government's approval.

²⁰⁹ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R2 089,849 263.16.

²¹⁰ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R1 069 026 315.79.

²¹¹ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: “Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie”, 4 November 1970, p. 17.

²¹² Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R1 360.

²¹³ 10% of the total broadcast time would be filled by advertisements. SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: “Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie”, 4 November 1970, p. 17.

further phases could be implemented according to future electronic developments, such as cable TV, for example. The Communications Satellite Corporation (COMSAT) in the USA and the International Telecommunications Satellite Consortium (INTELSAT), of which South Africa was a member, were largely responsible for the development of satellite broadcasts in 1970. As such, the Commission recommended that a satellite base station be constructed in phase one of the preparation for television. The base station would assist the SABC in monitoring imported broadcasts. The suggested capital required was estimated at R1,5 million.²¹⁴ According to the Commission's investigation, the SABC's personnel had to increase by a thousand to accommodate phase one.²¹⁵ It was expected that within the first five years 700 000 TV sets (350 000 colour and 350 000 black-and-white sets) would be purchased at a total value of R245 million; sales tax (20%) on imported appliances would amount to R24 million, and excise and importation tax (25%) would amount to R5,25 million. The financial figures for phase two were not provided as the Commission thought it too early to gauge these.

The Possible Impact on the South African Cinematic Film Industry

The Meyer Commission was under no illusions that television would result in a decrease in cinema attendance and that film producers, distributors and exhibitors would consequently experience financial losses. Distributors and exhibitors could also sustain an economic loss as a result of the decline in advertising revenue.²¹⁶ However, the Commission maintained that the South African film production industry had to be involved in the productions of TV programmes.²¹⁷ Rather than harming the industry, the Commission believed the introduction of television could be a source of new opportunities if a production house wished to expand its business activities. Regarding the local film distribution and exhibition industry, the Commission suggested introducing measures to support exhibitors and distributors. Firstly, television broadcasts and advertising times had to be limited to the bare minimum.²¹⁸ The Commission also considered TV a novelty, suggesting that cinema attendance would eventually stabilise, as had happened with film industries abroad.²¹⁹ However, the Commission

²¹⁴ Value in 2016, taking into account inflation: approximately R98 million. SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: "Verslag van die Kommissie van Onderzoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie", 4 November 1970, p. 17.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²¹⁶ If companies perceived advertisements on TV to be more effective.

²¹⁷ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: "Verslag van die Kommissie van Onderzoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie", 4 November 1970, p. 41.

²¹⁸ As indicated, 37 hours a week and 10% of the total broadcasting time, respectively.

²¹⁹ A topic which will be discussed in the next chapter.

stressed that the drive-in industry would suffer most significantly as families were expected to prefer TV entertainment. The Meyer Commission instructed local distributors and exhibitors to introduce a “strict rationalisation programme”, as implemented by Satbel, to soften the economic damage inflicted by the TV industry.²²⁰ Keeping rationalisation in mind, the Commission strongly advocated that government’s decision to introduce a television service should be implemented promptly, whilst a period of at least three years had to be allowed between the state’s announcement and the introduction of TV; circumspection was required when granting building permits for the construction of additional theatres; increased cinema admission prices had to be permitted; and lastly, the state had to allow concessions in South Africa’s entertainment tax.²²¹

The Meyer Commission completed its report on 4 November 1970.²²² As television was deemed a vehicle for education, South African broadcasting was relocated to the jurisdiction of the Department of National Education and, as such, the Minister of National Education, Senator J.P. van der Spuy.²²³ The report of the Commission of Research Regarding Matters Relating to Television was approved by government and on 27 April 1971 Minister van der Spuy officially announced that a statutorily-controlled television service, integrated into the SABC’s existing radio broadcasting service, would be introduced in South Africa.²²⁴

Conclusion

The postponement of the introduction of South African television could be attributed to a combination of technological, economic and – most paramount – political factors. Though often criticised, the formation of the SABC as a public broadcaster had arguably been the most effective option, considering the financial struggles sustained by private enterprises, including Schlesinger’s ABC, and the socio-economic context of the early twentieth century. The reason is that a public utility generates revenue to invest in the expansion of its services, whilst a private enterprise is largely influenced by the prospects of profitability. Taking this into account, the SABC was, as determined by the Broadcasting Act of 1936, immediately tasked to improve and expand radio broadcasts to all parts of South Africa, whilst being assured of

²²⁰ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: “Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie”, 4 November 1970, p. 41.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Correspondence from J.A. Marais (NP Parliamentarian) with an attached memorandum: “Die Verenigde Party en Televisie deur Jaap Marais, LV.”, 25 April 1966, p. 1.

²²³ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1971, p. 6.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

government support. One would struggle, taking the socio-economic and political environment created by government into consideration, to underplay the broadcasting achievements of the SABC since its inception in 1936 up until the introduction of regional and FM services in the 1960s. Whilst P.J. Meyer was criticised for his conservative, nationalistic inclinations, his appointment (yet again considering the political context) proved to be significant as his reorganisation of the SABC increased productivity and as such contributed to radio broadcasting's advancement, subsequently placing the SABC in a stable favourable position to implement television services.

However, whereas Meyer and the National Party contributed to the advancement of local radio broadcasting, their political concerns simultaneously contributed to the delay in introducing a television service in South Africa. Act 22 of 1936 ensured indirect state control of the SABC, whilst giving the government the authority to decide on the future of South African TV. As such, the role played by the *Verligtes* (i.e. B.J. Vorster and Basie van Rensburg) should not be understated. Their stance on political adaptation, coupled with technological developments in television (satellite-broadcasts), the emergence of the Afrikaner middle class and the 1969 moon landing, contributed towards Cabinet's decision to convene the Meyer Commission. Subsequently, the introduction of TV was announced in 1971. In retrospect, the integration of TV broadcasts with the existing radio service of the SABC benefitted the Afrikaans cinematic film industry (producers, distributors and exhibitors). As a public utility, semi-controlled by the state, measures were considered to soften the financial damage inflicted by the TV service. However, as TV had yet to be introduced and South Africa had a unique political, economic and social context, the true effects remained to be seen. Though the Meyer Commission remained optimistic and the announcement of the introduction of TV sparked excitement across South Africa, the cinematic industry realised that strategies had to be created through which to counteract the possible financial losses caused by television.

Chapter Four: The Afrikaans Cinematic Film Industry and its Preparation for Television, c.1970 - c.1975

“Although television was only officially launched in January 1976, test transmissions began in May 1975 – and South Africa was hooked.”¹

Introduction

The Afrikaans cinematic film industry continued to expand during the 1970s and, in terms of the quantity of locally produced films, ultimately reached its peak in 1975, the year before the SABC's television service commenced officially. Amendments were continuously made to the government subsidy scheme, whilst competition within South Africa's distribution and exhibition industry intensified, thus threatening the monopolistic control exercised by Ster Films and Kinekor. Apart from the industry's advancement, South Africa was also preparing for the introduction of the SABC's television broadcasts. Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to illustrate how the Afrikaans cinematic film industry developed from 1970 to 1975 and how this prepared it for the introduction of South African television. First, an overview of the SABC and government's preparation for the introduction of South African television will be provided – factors which ultimately shaped SABC-TV's broadcasts in and post-1976 as well as its impact, followed by a consideration of the influence of television on cinematic film industries abroad. The local cinematic film production industry will be discussed next by focusing on state support, profitability and censorship, and reflecting on how the industry prepared itself for television. *Kavalier Films* will once again be utilised as a case study. The further development of South Africa's film distribution and exhibition industry, which involves its preparation for local Television services, will be expanded upon.

Preparing for the Introduction of South African Television (SATV), 1971-1975

Following the announcement that SATV would commence in the Republic, the SABC immediately convened a team of consultants to advise the public on when preparing for the introduction of the television service. A document containing the Meyer Commission's findings was sent to 32 local and foreign TV experts and manufacturers, which in return evaluated the Commission's recommendations.² Secondly, the Television Project Committee,³ a group consisting of members of the SABC's Board of Directors, was established to plan and

¹ Michael, Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 102.

² SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1971, p. 7.

³ Project Committee in short.

administer the launch of the service.⁴ The Project Committee was responsible for overseeing the appointment and training of personnel (447 persons were employed in 1972 and a TV training facility was completed on 1 May 1973), the establishment of an economic broadcasting network and the construction of a television studio complex.⁵ Furthermore, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was founded at the request of government. The TAC, with J.N. Swanepoel (Director General and Chair of the SABC's Executive Committee) acting as Chairperson, provided information to SABC management and (through the SABC's Governing Body) to government regarding the "scientific, financial and technical aspects" of television.⁶

The TAC's first responsibility was to investigate the Meyer Commission's recommendation to adopt the PAL system.⁷ The TAC supported the Commission's finding, as the PAL system was deemed technically superior in comparison to the other colour systems. The PAL system was also most suitable for South Africa's sparsely distributed population and its terrain and, since most industrialized countries utilized the system, offered the most manufacturing support.⁸ On 28 October 1971 the Minister of National Education finally confirmed that South Africa would adopt the PAL system.⁹ Various other sub-committees of the TAC were appointed to determine the economic implications of SATV, the training of personnel, the cable systems required, the manufacturing and importation of receiving apparatus, and the socio-cultural makeup of South Africa before the introduction of TV.¹⁰ Most of the topics had already been reflected upon by the Meyer Commission, but what distinguishes the TAC from the Commission is that the former evaluated and consequently implemented the findings of the Commission. Carin Bevan

⁴ The Project Committee consisted of the following figures: D.H. Mills (Director of Technical Services), J.H.T. Schutte (Director of Television Programmes), G.A. de Bruyn (Director of Administration) and G.J. Yssel (Director of Personnel, Planning and Automation). Both Schutte and Yssel were members of the Broederbond. Ivor Wilkins & Hans Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond*, (Jeppestown: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2012), p. A1-A139. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1971, p. 6.

⁵ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1972, "Personeel aangeleentheid" and p. 8.

⁶ Prominent figures within the TAC included: J.T. van Wyk (Secretary of the Department of National Education), L. Rive (Postmaster-General), M.A. du Plessis (Secretary of the Department of Industry), G.J.J.F. Steyn (Secretary of the Department of Trade) and A.A. Middlecote (Director of the Department of Physics and Electronic Engineering. The TAC also consisted of members of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR/RGN), the IDC/NOK and the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS). SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1971, p. 7.

⁷ The other possibilities were the NTSC system (used in the USA) and the SECAM system (used in France).

⁸ Carin Bevan, *Putting Up Screens: A history of Television in South Africa, 1929-1976*, (Unpublished MHCS, University of Pretoria, 2008), p. 140.

⁹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1971, p. 7.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7-8.

provides a clear distinction in *Putting Up Screens: A History of Television in South Africa, 1929-1976*:

“The Meyer Commission’s report was intended as a research project ... on how a South African service ‘could’ and ‘should’ look and operate. The TAC’s research was an active planning process that laid the groundwork for how South African Television actually ‘would’ look.”¹¹

Providing a television service for the black population was perhaps the most significant example of a divergence from the Meyer Commission’s recommendations. As indicated in the previous chapter, the Meyer Commission suggested that Phase one should involve the introduction of a TV service that catered for both white, and black communities,¹² whilst Phase two entailed broadcasting separate channels in English and Afrikaans, and an extension of the black service.¹³ Following a request from the government, the SABC conducted an investigation into the proposed black TV service and submitted an official report in 1973.¹⁴ The conclusion was that the proposal to include the black TV service into phase one would be impractical and, as such, should be postponed until phase two had commenced.¹⁵ Five main reasons for the postponement included the issue of the training of black staff,¹⁶ the supply of suitable programmes for the black communities,¹⁷ the economic position of the black population, the absence of electricity in black communities,¹⁸ and a lack of manufactured TV sets.¹⁹ Phase one therefore entailed the planning and implementation of a white service, whilst

¹¹ Carin Bevan, *Putting Up Screens: A history of Television in South Africa, 1929-1976*, (Unpublished MHCS, University of Pretoria, 2008), p. 140.

¹² A channel consisting of Afrikaans and English programmes, and a channel in Zulu and Sotho for the Witwatersrand area.

¹³ Expanding the black service to Durban and the Eastern Cape.

¹⁴ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 305, Addendum H5/2/3/2, Minutes: “n Televisiediens vir die Bantoe”, August 1973, p. 1.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1974, p. 8.

¹⁶ The SABC maintained that a service for a black audience required the training of black personnel. At that stage the SABC’s television training facility accommodated white trainees who were being taught by foreign specialists. In addition, the public broadcaster proposed that white South Africans had to train the black personnel, even though many of the former had yet to complete the training course themselves.

¹⁷ The programmes that were produced and accumulated by the SABC were largely intended to satisfy the tastes of the white market. The SABC, which regarded the white and black populations as distinctly separate niche markets, argued that there was a lack of programmes suitable for black audiences. The broadcaster and government alike were reluctant to import films as they feared that their narratives and images might promote integration between different racial groups.

¹⁸ During the early 1970s only 7% of black households (excluding Coloureds and Asian South Africans) had electricity.

¹⁹ Carin Bevan, *Putting Up Screens: A history of Television in South Africa, 1929-1976*, (Unpublished MHCS, University of Pretoria, 2008), p. 142-145.

phase two was largely reserved for the preparation of a black (at the time called a ‘Bantu’) television service.

The SABC aimed to start experimental broadcasts in the southern region of the Transvaal, scheduled to commence in 1975, and launch the official national service in January of 1976.²⁰ Production of television-programmes (i.e. documentaries, TV series, interviews etc.) by key SABC staff members began in 1972 already, since the Board deemed the process to be an opportunity for personnel to gain experience and, of course, to have sufficient programme material available once the service was ultimately introduced. By 1973 more than 50% of phase one had been completed, whilst 45% of the television studio complex had been constructed in Auckland Park, Johannesburg (the headquarters of the SABC).²¹ Radio facilities in Cape Town and Durban were renovated to accommodate the TV service, whilst regional TV facilities were being constructed in Bloemfontein, Port Elizabeth and Polokwane (then Pietersburg).²² The installation of electronic equipment, valued at R14,5 million²³ and sourced from 11 different countries, commenced.²⁴ Eighteen TV transmission stations were constructed by 1974, whilst seven high-power transmitters, along with low-power transmitters, were erected in 1975.²⁵ The result was that 80% of the white population, 63% of the Coloured population, 84% of the Asian population and 39% of the Black population (“Bantu”) were able to receive TV broadcasts.²⁶ In the same year the emphasis of the preparation shifted from the technical aspects that would provide the service to the programme material of the proposed service. The TV training programme, a course provided by the SABC College focusing on technological issues such as filming, sound, film editing, was attended by 40 students when it began in May 1973.²⁷ In June 1973 20 students joined the programme that focused on the production of TV programmes, ranging from directing to production assistance. As a result, 40 television programmes were completed by 10 December 1973.²⁸ As indicated by the Meyer Commission, the SABC had to involve the local film production industry to compensate for the losses they would sustain when SATV became established. Furthermore, considering the number of programmes required to

²⁰ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1972, p. 8.

²¹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1973, p. 7.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R713 400 000.

²⁴ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1973, p. 7.

²⁵ Carin Bevan, *Putting Up Screens: A history of Television in South Africa, 1929-1976*, (Unpublished MHCS, University of Pretoria, 2008), p. 149.

²⁶ *Volkshandel*, February 1975, “TV 75: ‘n Spesiale Volkshandel-oorsig”, p. 96.

²⁷ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1973, p. 69.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

provide a complete service, it would be beneficial to involve members of the private sector as they had knowledge and experience of filmmaking. As such, film producers in the private sector, as well as the National Film Board,²⁹ were approached by the SABC for documentary production purposes, while the acquisition of foreign programmes increased.³⁰ Acquiring foreign programmes was deemed a necessity by the SABC's Project Committee as a TV service consisting of only local productions would be too expensive. The main reason was that, considering that the first TV studio complex had yet to be completed, South Africa lacked the facilities required to produce TV programmes.³¹ Local productions were dependent on traditional methods of filming, which were far more expensive.³² To maintain quality programming, the SABC argued, required finding an equilibrium between foreign and domestic productions, reminiscent of the policy adopted by Satbel.

In 1974 the SABC launched an intensive campaign to locate and assess local and foreign programme material. For example, 200 persons were assessed for participation in quiz shows, programmes specifically designed for children and women, talk shows and documentaries, whilst local writers were trained and involved in the production of 23 TV series.³³ Two outdoor broadcasting vehicles were acquired, whilst two more were expected to be delivered at the start of 1975. These vehicles were utilised for filming the biggest sporting events of the year. Foreign TV producers also assisted the SABC in the development of documentaries, which included co-productions with Belgische Radio en Televisie, and the Nederlandse Christelijke Radio Vereniging. Furthermore, 76 foreign programmes were acquired in 1974 that were all provided with an Afrikaans soundtrack.³⁴ The Minister of National Education announced that purchasing a TV licence would cost R36 a year, while TV advertisements would be permitted from 1 January 1978.³⁵ The SABC's expenditure on television in the preparation period was largely financed by loans which, for example, amounted to R30,8 million in 1974.³⁶ The SABC was advised by the Department of National Education and Finance, as well as the South African

²⁹ An organisation discussed in the next chapter.

³⁰ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1973, p. 7.

³¹ As a point of interest, the first American sitcom to be screened in South Africa was *The Brady Bunch*. The programme made its debut whilst TV broadcasts were still being tested from May 1975 to January 1976. Michael, Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 102.

³² SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1973, p. 8.

³³ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1974, p. 7.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8

³⁵ In this announcement the Minister also stated that advertisements would be allowed in the Black TV service. Big-T Hamburgers was the first company to be advertised on SATV. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1974, p. 14.

³⁶ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1974, p. 14.

Reserve Bank, in determining the arrangement of loans. Total capital expenditure³⁷ for phase one (“white service”) amounted to R65,4 million³⁸ by 31 December 1975, whilst total establishment expenditure³⁹ for the same period amounted to R29,9 million.⁴⁰ Whilst the groundwork for phase one was nearing completion, preparation for phase two, namely the planning of a ‘Bantu’ TV service, commenced – a topic reserved for the next chapter.

The SABC’s experimental South African television service commenced on 5 May 1975, broadcasting in the areas of Johannesburg and Pretoria (later extended to other parts of the country).⁴¹ The SABC’s first news bulletin,⁴² airing on the same day as the launch, made a debut that, from a broadcaster’s perspective, was most favourable as it covered the Fox Street Siege.⁴³ TV test transmissions were initially broadcast for an hour per day (from 1 pm to 2 pm), but because of the popularity of the broadcasts, transmissions were extended by an hour from 1 October (7:30 pm to 8:30 pm).⁴⁴ Not only had the experimental broadcasts ensured that a technological foundation was laid for the establishment of the official national TV service, it also provided the TV programme staff with much needed experience, promoted the sales of TV sets, and allowed the public an opportunity to familiarise themselves with television as medium. This achieved by means of individuals/households who were privileged enough to witness the broadcasts, but also through the South African press. For example, the February 1975 edition of *Volkshandel* provided a special overview of the preparation and eventual introduction of SATV, which discussed the size of the market, the influence of TV on South African industries, technological and financial statistics,⁴⁵ the roles of various state departments and the Post Office, the SABC’s training facilities, whilst also providing commercial advice (for instance, whether one should purchase or rent a TV set or what

³⁷ This included the TV broadcasting studio complex in Johannesburg, the training studio in Johannesburg, the outside broadcasting vehicles and transmission stations.

³⁸ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R2,5 billion.

³⁹ Establishment costs included TV staff salaries, interest, training costs, and the accumulation and production of TV programmes.

⁴⁰ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R1,14 billion. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1975, p. 15.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Kobus Hamman was appointed Head of the Television News division. Hans Strydom, famous Afrikaans actor (currently stars as At Koster in the Afrikaans TV soap *Binnelanders*) became South Africa’s first TV commentator during the test period. *Die Burger*, May 6, 1975, “Hoë lof vir TV – ondanks waarskuwing”, p. 3.

⁴³ David Protter, a security guard at the Israeli Consulate-General, took several hostages from the Israeli Embassy. He handed himself over to the Bureau for State Security nineteen hours later, but at the cost of four lives.

⁴⁴ Michael, Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 103.

⁴⁵ For example, the cost of TV transmission stations was estimated at R2,4 million.

procedures should be followed if a TV service problem arose).⁴⁶ Significant public events were broadcast during the experimental period, such as the inauguration of State President Nicolaas Johannes Diederichs. Various documentaries on prominent figures (including Isidore W. Schlesinger) in South Africa were produced by the SABC in 1975. However, in 1975 the emphasis of production fell on the making of local TV dramas which included *Willem, Jordan, Keertyd 11:30* and *The Villagers*.⁴⁷ Two magazine programmes, i.e. *Kamera 1* and *Looking In*, and two interview programmes, *Kollig* and *Profile*, were presented weekly.⁴⁸ Film producer, Jamie Uys, was amongst those interviewed in 1975. The TV test broadcasts were much admired by the press. *Die Transvaler*, for example, headlined with “SABC-TV passes its baptism of fire.”⁴⁹ *Die Burger* argued that the SABC “set a very high standard and therefore awakened an interest [in television] amongst the public.”⁵⁰ By the end of 1975 more than 200 000 television sets had been sold in South Africa.⁵¹ It therefore became immediately clear, due to the popularity of television – even during SATV’s infancy - that the Afrikaans cinematic film industry would have to adapt its operations to face the challenges which would be presented post-1976. This argument is further justified when looking at the statistics presented in foreign case studies.



Illustration 9: Hans Strydom, South Africa’s first Afrikaans news commentator⁵²

Influence of Television on Cinematic Film Industries Abroad

⁴⁶ *Volkshandel*, February 1975, “TV 75: ‘n Spesiale Volkshandel-oorsig”, p. 85-119.

⁴⁷ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1975, p. 56-58.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Die Transvaler*, May 6, 1975, “SAUK-TV slaag in vuurdoop”, p. 1.

⁵⁰ *Die Burger*, May 6, 1975, “Hoë lof vir die TV- ondanks waarskuwing”, p. 3.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Rapport*, Mei 11, 1975, “Rika se kans op TV: SAUK waag met vrou”, p. 7.

The introduction of television services had profound effects on cinematic film industries across the globe, although to varying degrees. Therefore, the timing of SATV's introduction was beneficial for the local industry as film producers, exhibitors and distributors, as well as government, could utilise industries in other countries as case studies/models to best prepare for television services in South Africa. This was an option that many other industrialised Western countries (such as the USA or Europe) did not have. In 1948 four networks, i.e. the Dumont Television Network,⁵³ the American Broadcasting Company (ABC), the Columbia Broadcasting Service (CBS) and the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), along with 25 stations were established in the United States.⁵⁴ In the same year effective commercial TV services were launched which gave the industry unprecedented prominence.⁵⁵ Before this broadcasting companies had relied on token charges made for experimental transmissions. The American TV industry realised that substantial revenue could be generated through advertising. Commercial rates were increased by 40% and the quality of programmes rose accordingly.⁵⁶ What followed was a boom in the American TV industry. By 1950 the USA had 104 TV stations and was broadcasting to more than 1 million TV-sets (an incredible figure, considering that NBC had sold only 400 sets after its first five months on air in 1939/40).⁵⁷ The introduction of the USA's commercial services completely shook the foundations of Hollywood. By the end of the 1950s the number of TV sets in use increased to approximately 50 million. Television, according to Douglas Gomery, surpassed cinema as America's leading mass medium.⁵⁸ Between 1945 and 1947 annual cinema attendance averaged 3,658 million.⁵⁹ From 1948 to 1958 annual cinema attendance in the USA decreased to 1,550 million – in other words, a decline of 58%. From 1963 to 1968 the number fell by a further 474 million. Despite a 35% increase in the USA's population, annual cinema attendance dropped by 71% within twenty years.⁶⁰ The socio-demographic structure of the USA after the Second World War contributed

⁵³ Operations ceased in 1955.

⁵⁴ Michael, Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 101.

⁵⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1A, Memorandum provided to the Meyer Commission: "Mankor Beleggings Bpk: Verslag namens Kinekor en Ster Organisasies", March 1970, p. 1.

⁵⁶ Michael, Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 100.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

⁵⁸ Douglas Gomery, "The Coming of Television and the 'Lost' Motion Picture Audience", *Journal of Film and Video* 37 (1985), p. 5.

⁵⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1A, Memorandum provided to the Meyer Commission: "Mankor Beleggings Bpk: Verslag namens Kinekor en Ster Organisasies", March 1970, p. 1.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

to the immense drop in numbers as more young couples lived in newly constructed suburbs and preferred entertainment in their homes.⁶¹

Although the BBC had launched regular scheduled TV programmes in 1936, the true effects of TV in the United Kingdom could be calculated only after 1945. In 1939-1945 British transmissions were interrupted because of hostilities posed during the Second World War.⁶² From 1946 to 1954, when commercial TV services were prohibited, cinema attendance declined by 18,1%.⁶³ The Television Act of 1954, designed to break the TV monopoly held by the BBC, subsequently led to the launch of Independent Television (better known as ITV) in 1955 and as such, it became Britain's first independent commercial TV service.⁶⁴ Additional commercial TV stations would be established in the years to come. The introduction of commercial TV services had a catastrophic impact on the British cinematic film industry as theatre attendance dropped by a further 55,2% by 1962 and by 31% by 1969.⁶⁵ The large drop in cinema attendance after 1955 can be attributed to the quality of television programmes, which were naturally reliant on the availability of funds (similar to the cinematic film industry). From 1946 to 1954 the BBC made a financial loss of £10 million and therefore could not produce programmes that could compete with the cinema experience.⁶⁶ However, the introduction of ITV not only offered British viewers a larger variety of programmes, but also forced the BBC to increase the quality of its products so as to compete with ITV. The BBC subsequently garnered much praise and was awarded a second channel (BBC 2) in 1962. BBC 2 became the first European channel to broadcast regularly in colour from 1 July 1967.⁶⁷

In West Germany, a similar pattern was manifested after the introduction of commercial TV services in 1953. Cinema attendance dropped by 43% after a decade and a further 32% by

⁶¹ Gerben Bakker, "The Economic History of the International Film Industry", EH.Net Encyclopedia, edited by Robert Whaples, February 10, 2008. Accessed: September 8, 2016: <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-the-international-film-industry/>.

⁶² Michael, Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC*, (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 99.

⁶³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1A, Memorandum provided to the Meyer Commission: "Mankor Beleggings Bpk: Verslag namens Kinekor en Ster Organisasies", March 1970, p. 1-2.

⁶⁴ Stuart A. Shorestein, "Does Public Television Have a Future?", *The Wilson Quarterly* 5(1981), p. 72.

⁶⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1A, Memorandum provided to the Meyer Commission: "Mankor Beleggings Bpk: Verslag namens Kinekor en Ster Organisasies", March 1970, p. 2.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Richard G. Elen, "TV Technology 8. Britain In Colour - and UHF", *Screen Online*, Accessed: October 5, 2016: <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/tv/technology/technology8.html>.

1968.⁶⁸ The number of TV sets increased from 8,4 million in 1963 to 13,4 million in 1978. In Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), which introduced commercial TV in 1961, cinema and drive-in attendance fell by 56% and 64%, respectively, by 1969.⁶⁹ A decrease in cinema attendance affected not only film exhibitors and distributors, but also film producers as distributors would become more selective about the films they utilized for circulation. MANKOR Beleggings Ltd⁷⁰ argued:

“It becomes clear that the effect of the introduction of a commercial TV service⁷¹... would be very serious; however, the degree would in actuality be determined by the popular public impact, the quality and schedules of [South Africa’s] television programmes.”⁷²

The early 1970s were uncertain and nervous times for many local film producers. One of the reasons was that most local filmmakers simply did not know what their role would be once SATV arrived. Many producers, including Pax Morgan (Killarney Films), Emil Nofal and Jans Rautenbach, as well as the National Film Board (NFB), accused the SABC of failing to clarify what could be expected from a South African film producer. Pax Morgan maintained that “we [local film producers] know as much as the public regarding the matter ... we must think of studios and training, the type of film that should be created and the costs.”⁷³ Jamie Uys, on the other hand, was less suspicious and suggested that the SABC would involve the film producing industry “when it [the SABC] was ready” and that preparation by producers should not be done too hurriedly. However, it must be stated, Uys chose to avoid making productions for television.

“Apart from the fact that I do not like TV; it is a medium that moves too quickly [and is] too journalistic in a certain way. I prefer spending more time and consideration on a [cinematic] film. I am not interested in creating TV motion pictures.”⁷⁴

The Local Cinematic Film Production Industry, 1970-1975

⁶⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1A, Memorandum provided to the Meyer Commission: “Mankor Beleggings Bpk: Verslag namens Kinekor en Ster Organisasies”, March 1970, p. 3.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ In 1964 Sanlam obtained a controlling interest in Maganese Corporation Ltd. The company managed Sanlam’s industrial activities. Its name was changed to MANKOR Beleggings Ltd. Randall Adams, *Die ver-Suid-Afrikanisering van die Suid-Afrikaanse ekonomie: ’n Studie van SANLAM (1918-1980)*, (Ongepubliseerde M.A., Universiteit van Stellenbosch, 2011), p. 84.

⁷¹ SATV generated income through TV license fees and commercials.

⁷² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1A, Memorandum provided to the Meyer Commission: “Mankor Beleggings Bpk: Verslag namens Kinekor en Ster Organisasies”, March 1970, p. 3.

⁷³ *Rapport*, May 30, 1971, “Filmbase agterdochtig oor SAUK”, p. 11.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

At the start of the 1970s the most successful South African motion picture producers were Mimosa Films, Emil Nofal Film Productions, *Kavalier Films* and Killarney Films.⁷⁵ These production companies, however, deployed differing strategies as a means of generating box office successes. Mimosa and Emil Nofal's productions relied on quality over quantity, whilst Killarney and particularly *Kavaliers* produced films at a rapid tempo to ensure that if a film was unsuccessful, the next production could make up for the financial losses sustained. On 27 October 1971 the Board of Trade and Industry launched an investigation to determine whether the "nature" and "scope" of the subsidy scheme (which had been amended in 1969) was most "effective" and could be "justified" considering that the NP tried to minimise government expenditure (approximately R5 million⁷⁶ had been paid in subsidies since the introduction of the scheme).⁷⁷ The study, completed in March 1972, investigated the 35 South African films that were produced in 1967-1970. The need for government subsidy remained undisputed, as the report again emphasised the local films' cultural and political (diplomatic) value.⁷⁸ The Board reported:

"In the absence of such [local] entertainment, [South Africa] will inevitably revert to the *volksvreemde*⁷⁹ to the detriment of [our] unique development."⁸⁰

Furthermore, South African films made a considerable economic contribution; for example, the admission fees (of the abovementioned 35 films) paid by the South African public amounted to approximately R8,5 million, thus representing a substantial saving in foreign exchange.⁸¹ Thirdly, keeping in mind that South African films would not be profitable without state intervention, the state considered the possible impact that South African television could

⁷⁵ Mimosa Films, formed in 1964; Bill and Boet Troskie, along with Jamie Uys, would make some of the most successful films to be produced in South Africa. Not only would Mimosa find success locally, but films such as *Dirkie/Lost in the Desert* (1971), *Beautiful People* (1974) and *Funny People* (1976) would enjoy international success. According to Keyan Tomaselli, *Katrina* grossed approximately R900 000 (R58 million in 2016). Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 41. Some of Killarney's films include *Taxi* (1970) and *The Men from the Ministry* (1971). SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Correspondence from L.J. Visser: "Staatshulp aan die rolprentbedryf". 31 August 1972, p. 1.

⁷⁶ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R320 million.

⁷⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: "Staatshulp aan die Rolprentbedryf", 24 May 1972, p. 1 and p. 10.

⁷⁸ Even though very few South African productions were circulated internationally.

⁷⁹ Lit. "what is foreign to the nation"; dependence on foreign product would mean that that people will be exposed to foreign values and images.

⁸⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: "Staatshulp aan die Rolprentbedryf", 24 May 1972, p. 8.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

have on the survival of the cinematic film industry.⁸² The government concluded that an abolition of, or drastic reduction in, subsidy pay-outs would impair the industry's preparation for SATV as the state wished to involve local film producers in the production of TV programmes. The Board of Trade and Industry elaborated on this:

"A situation can easily emerge in which the [local] TV service, as with early cinematic entertainment,⁸³ could be overwhelmed by foreign productions to the detriment of our country's traditions, language and culture."⁸⁴

Though the number remained vastly less than the influx of foreign productions, the quantity of local motion pictures had increased significantly. However, questions around the quality of Afrikaans films persisted. Critics (e.g. *SA Film Weekly*, arguably the toughest) argued that local films lacked quality as the scheme continued to attract inexperienced filmmakers and business opportunists. For example, in 1974 Michael Venables wrote in a review in *Showmail*⁸⁵ entitled "Why Subsidise this Rubbish?" expressing the view that "as a taxpayer, I am disgusted that the state should be wasting money on subsidising this sort of trash. On this evidence anyone who hadn't seen an Afrikaans film recently would think no progress had been made for 25 years."⁸⁶ The solution, critics believed, was to ease censorship regulations, whilst the qualification figure of R50 000 (in GBO revenue) had to be significantly increased. However, counterarguments, made by figures such as H.J. Terblanche (Chair of the *Genootskap vir die Handhawing van Afrikaans*), suggested that critics attached an "exaggerated significance" to a few poorly executed films and that art and/or entertainment would always be of fluctuating quality.⁸⁷

Though the Board concluded that a drastic change in the subsidy scheme would be erroneous, an amendment was still required to minimise state expenditure and to enhance the quality of South African productions. An amendment, the government argued, had to be introduced which was least demanding in terms of costs and administration.⁸⁸ Increasing the GBO qualification figure was discarded as an option. In the period 1967-1970 only 4 out of 39 South African productions failed to qualify for government subsidies. Had the qualification figure been raised

⁸² This point will be expanded upon below.

⁸³ Before the subsidy was introduced.

⁸⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: "Staatshulp aan die Rolprentbedryf", 24 May 1972, p. 9.

⁸⁵ He was reviewing the Afrikaans film, *Suster Teresa* (1974).

⁸⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 7, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 5, Newspaper article in *Showmail*: "Why subsidise this rubbish?" (N/D), (n.p.).

⁸⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report 1753 of the Board of Trade and Industry: "Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika", 21 December 1976, p. 10.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

to R100 000 (during this period), a further 4 motion pictures would have failed to meet the requirements for subsidy regulations.⁸⁹ The government felt that the increased number of films failing to qualify of too little significance considering the risk involved, i.e. placing a damper on the tempo of South Africa's film production.

Table 13:⁹⁰ Films that would not Qualify for Subsidy if GBO qualification was raised to R100 000, 1967-1970			
Name	Producer	GBO revenue *R	Subsidy Received *R
<i>Vrolike Vrydag</i>	Heyns-Advert Films	55 323	2 820
<i>Die Onwettige Huwelik</i>	<i>Protea Film Produksies</i>	66 461	9 746
<i>Satan's Harvest</i>	Killarney Film	77 439	13 132
<i>The Jackals</i>	Killarney Film	80 651	13 242

The state, therefore, concluded that subsidies should be paid according to a film's net box office revenue (NBO) rather than its GBO.⁹¹ The amendment was deemed to eliminate the administrative hassle of dissimilar taxation tariffs in different parts of South Africa.⁹² Furthermore, calculating subsidies according to NBO revenue prevented producers' subsidy returns to differ from possible future amendments in recreation and/or cinematographic taxes.⁹³ According to the Board, the new scheme would save the Department of Trade and Industry an estimated 15% in subsidy payments.⁹⁴ In the interests of quality, the Board of Trade and Industry suggested that the subsidy qualification figure should be increased from R50 000 in

⁸⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report 1753 of the Board of Trade and Industry: "Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika", 21 December 1976, p. 12.

⁹⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: "Staatshulp aan die Rolprentbedryf", 24 May 1972, p. 13.

⁹¹ Both GBO and NBO were listed in the returns of exhibitors that were presented for subsidy purposes. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Correspondence: "Ondersoek na die winsgewendheid van die plaaslike rolprentbedryf", 30 September 1973, p. 1.

⁹² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: "Staatshulp aan die Rolprentbedryf", 24 May 1972, p. 12.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Correspondence: "Ondersoek na die winsgewendheid van die plaaslike rolprentbedryf", 30 September 1973, p. 1.

GBO revenue to R50 000 in NBO returns.⁹⁵ Amendments to the subsidy scheme applied from 1 April 1973 and within the first year saved government between 17% and 18% in film subsidy payments.⁹⁶ Table 14 demonstrates the actual profits generated by three local filmmakers (from 1967-1970) versus the profits they would have generated if calculated according to NBO returns.⁹⁷

Table 14:⁹⁸ Actual Profits of Three Local Film Producers, 1967-1970 (In Rand)							
Company	Total Films	Total Production Costs	Total Income	Net Profit		Subsidy Received	
				Amount	% of Production	Amount	% of Production
<i>Kavalier Films</i>	10	1 920 722	2 214 463	291 741	15,1	1 374 689	71,6
<i>Mimosa Films</i>	2	466 572	656 491	189 919	40,7	427 188	91,6
<i>Emil Nofal Produksies</i>	3	735 813	963 811	227 998	30,1	595 888	81,0
Profits of Three Local Film Producers if based on Net Box Office Revenue, 1967-1970 (In Rand)							
Company	Total Films	Total Production Costs	Total Income	Net Profit		Subsidy Received	
				Amount	% of Production	Amount	% of Production
<i>Kavalier Films</i>	10	1 920 722	2 147 063	226 341	11,8	1 309 289	68,2
<i>Mimosa Films</i>	2	466 572	588 418	121 846	26,1	359 115	77,0
<i>Emil Nofal Produksies</i>	3	735 813	928 986	193 173	26,3	561 063	76,3

The Vereniging van Vollengte Rolprentvervaardigers van Suid-Afrika (VVRSA)

⁹⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: "Staatshulp aan die Rolprentbedryf", 24 May 1972, p. 20.

⁹⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Correspondence: "Ondersoek na die winsgewendheid van die plaaslike rolprentbedryf", 30 September 1973, p. 1-2.

⁹⁷ Table 14 illustrates the figures which ultimately convinced the government to amend the subsidy scheme.

⁹⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1, Minutes: "Staatshulp aan die Rolprentbedryf", 24 May 1972, p. 15-16.

On 30 September 1972 the Department of Trade and Industries (DTI) distributed circular *N. 101/3/1* to notify the industry of the amendments made to the subsidy scheme.⁹⁹ Some filmmakers were dissatisfied with the reduction of subsidy pay-outs and as a response, founded the *Vereniging van Vollengte Rolprentvervaardigers van Suid-Afrika* (VVRSA) on 17 October 1972.¹⁰⁰ The VVRSA was established to serve as a channel of communication between state and local filmmakers in which producers could effectively reflect on the subsidy scheme and voice any objections, if required. Ben Vlok, Managing Director of *Kavalier Films*, was appointed Chairman of the Association.¹⁰¹ Reacting to government's circular, the Association made the following suggestions: the qualification figure of R50 000 in NBO revenue had to be increased to R100 000; the subsidy rates for Afrikaans and English films should be increased from 55% to 65% and 44% to 52% respectively; government needed to consider an increased subsidy bearing in mind the introduction of SATV; and lastly the government had to consider a substantial subsidy for locally produced films distributed in foreign countries.¹⁰² These suggestions, as indicated, did not materialise. However, though the VVRSA failed in its initial efforts, the Association would become a body of great influence after local television services commenced in South Africa.

Profitability and Expenditure of the Cinematic Production Industry

On 30 April 1975 the Minister of Home Affairs Connie Mulder requested the Board of Trade and Industry to investigate the efficiency of government's incentives in expanding the film industry.¹⁰³ The profitability of the cinematic industry was based on 60 randomly selected films released from 1970 to 1974.¹⁰⁴ Approximately 66% of locally produced films were profitable, whilst 26% generated profits exceeding 50%.¹⁰⁵ Remuneration for labour accounted for the largest share of production expenditure: 29,8% to permanent employees and 5,9% to part-time labour. Actors' and actresses' salaries amounted to 3,4% while the technical and production

⁹⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Memorandum provided by the Vereniging van Vollengte Rolprentvervaardigers: "Memorandum insake finansiële hulp aan die plaaslike rolprentbedryf", 25 October 1972, p. 1.

¹⁰⁰ Association of Feature Film Producers of South Africa. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 01. Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Memorandum provided by the Vereniging van Vollengte Rolprentvervaardigers: "Memorandum insake finansiële hulp aan die plaaslike rolprentbedryf", 25 October 1972, p. 1.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 1-4.

¹⁰³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report 1753 of the Board of Trade and Industry: "Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika", 21 December 1976, p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ The names of these films were not specified.

¹⁰⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report 1753 of the Board of Trade and Industry: "Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika", 21 December 1976, p. 1.

staff, regarded as “most essential in film producing” and accounting for 133 of a total of 244 employees, received 17,6% of total expenditure.¹⁰⁶ Production artists and the development/print of film constituted 5,3% and 16,9% respectively. The remaining expenditure components amounted to less than 5% each regarding production expenses.¹⁰⁷ Government considered the profits and number of Afrikaans films produced since the introduction of the first subsidy scheme as “entirely satisfactory.”¹⁰⁸ The profitability of film production companies was measured in relation to production costs rather than fixed assets. To reduce the financial risks involved, most Afrikaans producers preferred renting film equipment and studio facilities, whilst permanent employment was kept to a bare minimum. Calculating the industry’s profitability according to fixed assets would therefore provide an impractical conclusion. A study conducted by the Association valued the average GBO revenue generated by a South African production at R280 000,¹⁰⁹ whilst the revenue of foreign films distributed in SA was estimated to be R70 000.¹¹⁰ The Board of Trade and Industry claimed that local productions earned 17% of the total GBO revenue in South Africa.¹¹²

Table 15:¹¹¹ Profits as Percentage of Expenditure, 1970-1974	
Size-Group (%)	Number of Films
100 to 165	8
50 to 99	6
20 to 49	11
10 to 19	8
0 to 9	2
(-) 9 to 0	1
(-) 19 to (-) 10	1
(-) 39 to (-) 20	7
(-) 99 to (-) 40	9
Results unknown	7
Total Films	60

¹⁰⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report 1753 of the Board of Trade and Industry: “Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika”, 21 December 1976, p. 6.

¹⁰⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report 1753 of the Board of Trade and Industry: “Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika”, 21 December 1976, p. 7.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁰⁹ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R11,8 million.

¹¹⁰ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R3 million. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report 1753 of the Board of Trade and Industry: “Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika”, 21 December 1976, p. 13.

¹¹¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report 1753 of the Board of Trade and Industry: “Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika”, 21 December 1976, p. 7.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

Despite the adjustments made to the subsidy scheme that were introduced in April 1973, subsidy payments did increase from 1974 to 1975. Two reasons largely account for this. After the international success of *Dirkie/Lost in the Desert* (1971), Jamie Uys, in association with Mimosa Films, produced the highly successful feature, *Beautiful People* (also known as *Animals Are Beautiful People*). *Beautiful People* was filmed as a wildlife documentary in the Kalahari, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Namibia. According to Mimosa,¹¹³ *Beautiful People* (1974) demonstrates “how the wild kingdom and the human world mirror each other. Part comedy, part drama, part adventure, part tragedy, part romance, part action, part educational – the picture, essentially, is a combination of genres.”¹¹⁴ Production lasted 18 months, costs amounted to over a million dollars and over 800 000 meters of film was used to capture the wildlife scenes.¹¹⁵ Jamie Uys, in association with the American company, Paramount Pictures, edited the film to produce a final product which was 3 000 meters in length, and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer distributed *Beautiful People* in the international market.¹¹⁶ By 1975 the film grossed over R3 million in South Africa:¹¹⁷ “At just one South African bioscope it sold more tickets than an average Afrikaans movie grosses nationally.”¹¹⁸ Success, however, was not only limited to South African audiences; for example, the motion picture set an attendance record in Bangkok; *Beautiful People*’s GBO revenue was twice that of *Star Wars* (1977) in Hong Kong; within a space of three weeks the film made \$525 000 in Los Angeles; and by 1980 it had earned approximately \$15 million in total.¹¹⁹ In 1974 *Beautiful People* was awarded the Golden Globe for Best Documentary by the Hollywood Press Association.¹²⁰

¹¹³ Currently known as Mimosa Film Group.

¹¹⁴ Mimosa Film Group, “Beautiful People (aka Animals are Beautiful People)”, Accessed: October 10, 2016: <http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/Archive/Film/76/beautiful-people-aka-animals-are-beautiful-people->.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* Andre le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 147. Mimosa Film Group, “Beautiful People (aka Animals are Beautiful People)”, Accessed: October 10, 2016: <http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/Archive/Film/76/beautiful-people-aka-animals-are-beautiful-people->.

¹¹⁶ Andre le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 147.

¹¹⁷ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R127 million.

¹¹⁸ Mimosa Film Group, “Beautiful People (aka Animals are Beautiful People)”, Accessed: October 10, 2016: <http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/Archive/Film/76/beautiful-people-aka-animals-are-beautiful-people->.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ Andre le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 147.



Illustration 10: Mimosa's film studio in Johannesburg in the 1960s.¹²¹



Illustration 11: Jamie Uys filming *Beautiful People*.¹²²

The unprecedented success of the film, however, caused temporary panic amongst local film producers. According to Keyan Tomaselli, *Beautiful People* received a subsidy pay-out of over R700 000 – an unexpected amount that government had failed to budget for.¹²³ Consequently, the Board of Trade and Industry, under its Chairman, Basjan Kleu, was forced to freeze subsidy payments until the Budget of 1975.¹²⁴ Ben Vlok, head of the VVRSA, subsequently stated that “bankruptcy is everyone’s fate” and as such, immediately organised negotiations with the state.¹²⁵ An article which appeared in the Afrikaans newspaper *Rapport*, however, was less sympathetic, suggesting that Afrikaners’ (and the Afrikaans press) were becoming more critical when it came to the quality of Afrikaans films. A section of the article reflects on the freezing of subsidy pay-outs in 1974:

¹²¹ Mimosa Film Group, “Welcome to Mimosa Films”, Accessed: 15 March 2017: <http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/>.

¹²² Mimosa Film Group, “Feature Films – Beautiful People (aka Animals are Beautiful People)”, Accessed: 15 March 2017: <http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/Feature/76/beautiful-people-aka-animals-are-beautiful-people->.

¹²³ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R29,7 million.

Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 36.

¹²⁴ *Rapport*, 3 November 1974, “Rolprente”, p. 14.

¹²⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 7, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 5, Newspaper Article in the *Rapport*: “Filmbase gered uit penarie”, 10 November 1974, p. 23.

“Yet it would be good if this step led to a little self-examination. In recent years, it seems, the accumulation of a ‘quick-buck’ has become the principal objective for some of our film producers... Even the most credulous public can only tolerate so many dud works before losing their confidence in the entire industry.”¹²⁶

Before the 1970s most major newspapers opted not to be critical of South Africa’s film production industry in its entirety. According to Tomaselli, the Afrikaans press did not reflect on themes in depth, whilst English newspapers purposefully avoided condemning Afrikaans films to avoid accusations of what Robert Greig (*The Star*) described as “*boerehaat*” (hatred of Boers/Afrikaners).¹²⁷ The Board of Trade and Industry responded positively to the requests of the VVRSA. Surplus money accumulated from other departments were utilised to subsidise local films until the next state budget.¹²⁸ The total subsidy paid in 1974/75 was R2,57 million, i.e. a million rand more than was originally appropriated.¹²⁹

The second cause for the increased subsidisation of local films was the extraordinary upsurge regarding the quantity of Afrikaans and English motion pictures released in 1974/75 (28 films) and 1975/76 (26 films). Leon van Nierop argues in his book *Daar Doer in die Fliek* that the increase of locally produced films should be attributed to the advent of SATV: “The 1970s were characterised by the fact that many directors were preparing for television and subsequently used films as a place of training.”¹³⁰ On the other hand, since the influence of television could only be speculated, some local filmmakers sought to secure as much revenue as possible to be in a strong financial position once SATV had eventually arrived. Table 16 shows the number of local Afrikaans and English films produced from 1969 to 1975.

¹²⁶ *Rapport*, 3 November 1974, “Rolprente”, p. 14

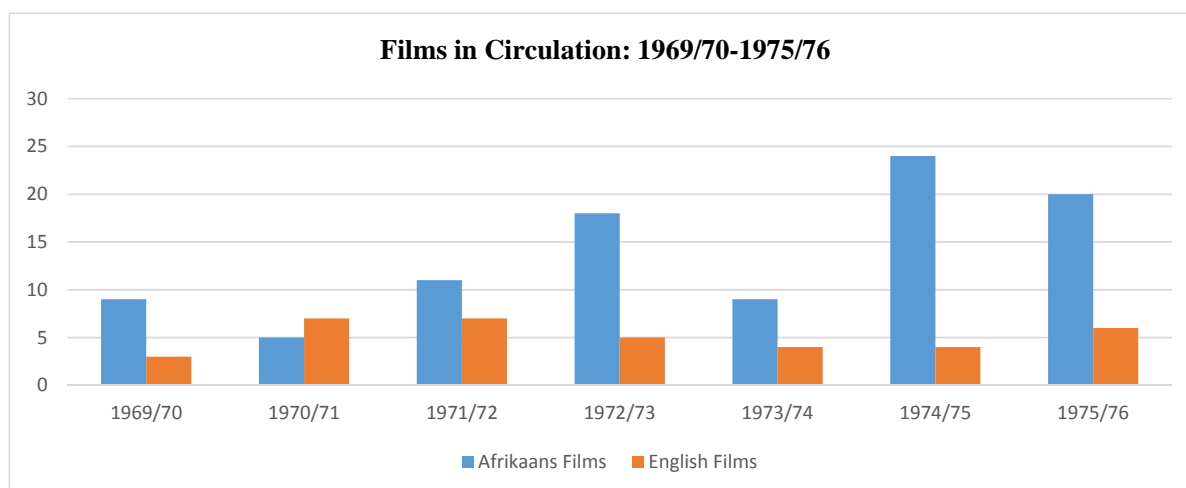
¹²⁷ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 102.

¹²⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 7, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 5, Newspaper Article in the *Rapport*: “Filmbase gered uit penarie”, 10 November 1974, p. 23.

¹²⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 7, Addendum: N101/3/1 Volume 3, Circular: “Rolprente Vrygestel”, 1983, (n.p).

¹³⁰ Leon van Nierop, *Daar Doer in die Fliek: ‘n Persoonlike Blik op die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Rolprent* (Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2016), p. 186.

Table 16: ¹³¹ Films in Circulation, 1969/70-1975/76				
Fiscal Year	Number According to Language			Subsidy Paid to all Locally Produced Films (Rand)
	Afrikaans	English	Total	
1969/70	9	3	5	741 961
1970/71	5	7	12	1 364 383
1971/72	11	7	18	963 087
1972/73	18	5	23	1 450 860
1973/74	9	4	13	1 513 732
1974/75	24	4	28	2 566 590
1975/76	20	6	26	2 900 637



The Influence of Censorship on the South African Production Industry

Chapter One discussed the PCB broadly, whilst the films *Debbie* (1965) and *Katrina* (1968) were utilised as case studies to provide an example of how government influenced what South Africans could see on the silver screen. Another case study, *Kavalier Films' The Liberators* (1972), will be used as an example below. However, what follows is an account of the impact of censorship on South African films in the period 1972-1974 to demonstrate the conservatism (regarding themes) that manifested in film production, derived from various ideological aspects of apartheid during South Africa's pre-TV era. This section is included as these conservative

¹³¹ Table 16's purpose is to illustrate the increase in films produced by the local industry as they prepared for SATV, despite the amendments made which lessened government's subsidy payouts. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 7, Addendum: N101/3/1 Volume 3, Circular: "Rolprente Vrygestel", 1983, (n.p).

attitudes continued post-1976 and played an integral part in limiting the industry regarding the formulation of strategies to counter the financial threats posed by SABC-TV as will be expanded upon in Chapter Five. This will be evaluated in four categories, i.e. sexual intercourse, crime, violence and race relations/integration. The information is derived from a study conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council's (HSRC/RGN): *Die inhoud en gehalte van 'n steekproef Suid-Afrikaanse rolprente voor die instelling van Televisie* in 1976.¹³² The investigation was undertaken on the instructions of the Meyer Commission in 1971 (paragraph 141 and repeated in paragraph 411).¹³³ Seven local films produced in 1972, seven local films produced in 1973 and ten local films produced in 1974, were randomly selected for examination.¹³⁴

The results provided were extremely detailed, particularly regarding scenes depicting sexual intercourse. From 1972 to 1974 the HSRC established that there were zero sexually explicit scenes in local films; however, in 1974 three scenes (out of 24 films) contained images which were deemed "risky".¹³⁵ A point of interest is that there were no scenes of, or references to, homosexuality, categorised under sexual intercourse, in any of the films selected for investigation. References to sex were few: 13 scenes in total.¹³⁶ What South African censorship had prohibited in the 1970s is in complete contrast in comparison to what is accepted in local films produced in the new millennium. For example, the Afrikaans teen comedies *Poena is Koning* (2006) and *Bakgat* (2008)¹³⁷ would never have been allowed distribution during the apartheid period. The HSRC/RGN reported that none of the films produced in 1972-1974 contained any scenes in which racial integration were promoted.¹³⁸ The following tables

¹³² "The content and quality of a sample of South African films before the introduction of television."

¹³³ SAB, Minister of Home Affairs/Private Secretary (MES), 163, Addendum: H3/5, Volume 3, Report: "Verslag van die Kommissie van Ondersoek Insake Aangeleenthede Betreffende Televisie", 4 November 1970, p. 47.

¹³⁴ G. Puth, *Die Inhoud en Gehalte van 'n Steekproef Suid-Afrikaanse Rolprente voor die Instelling van Televisie*, (Pretoria: Raad van Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing, 1976), p. 27.

¹³⁵ This does not suggest scenes of intercourse or nudity. G. Puth, *Die Inhoud en Gehalte van 'n Steekproef Suid-Afrikaanse Rolprente voor die Instelling van Televisie*, (Pretoria: Raad van Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing, 1976), p. 36.

¹³⁶ There were five references to sex outside marriage, five to sex before marriage and 3 to sex during a marriage. G. Puth, *Die Inhoud en Gehalte van 'n Steekproef Suid-Afrikaanse Rolprente voor die Instelling van Televisie*, (Pretoria: Raad van Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing, 1976), p. 36.

¹³⁷ *Poena is Koning* depicts scenes of nudity and has sexual references from the beginning. Poena (Robbie Wessels), the main character, is a school pupil who in one scene wishes to have sexual intercourse with his teacher (she also appears nude in the scene). In *Bakgat* there is a simple hand gesture that would have caused controversy, as two young school pupils, celebrating a situation, yell "Skêr-Kwagga!" (Scissor it buddy!) whilst using a hand gesture depicting sexual relations between two females.

¹³⁸ G. Puth, *Die Inhoud en Gehalte van 'n Steekproef Suid-Afrikaanse Rolprente voor die Instelling van Televisie*, (Pretoria: Raad van Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing, 1976), p. 32.

indicate the level of violence (Table 17) and criminal activities (Table 18) depicted in films produced in South Africa.

Table 17:¹³⁹ Violence Depicted in Locally Produced Films, 1972-1974.				
Year	1972	1973	1974	Total
Number of Films	7	7	10	24
Number of Scenes	46	27	61	134
Average per film	6,6	3,9	6,1	5,6

Table 18:¹⁴⁰ Criminal Activities Depicted in Locally Produced Films, 1972-1974				
Year	1972	1973	1974	Total
Number of Films	7	7	10	24
Number of Crimes	1	15	24	46
Average per film	1	2,1	2,4	1,9

A conclusion can be drawn that censorship, along with market taste, had made violence and criminal activities more acceptable than scenes portraying sexual intercourse and racial mixing – the latter being most threatening to Afrikaner nationalism and, as such, white rule in South Africa. The investigation once again illustrated the importance of family-friendly entertainment (“*Gesinsvriendelikheid*” and age restrictions, discussed in Chapter Two) for producers of Afrikaans productions. For example, the study indicated that 44,4% of English

¹³⁹ G. Puth, *Die Inhoud en Gehalte van 'n Steekproef Suid-Afrikaanse Rolprente voor die Instelling van Televisie*, (Pretoria: Raad van Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing, 1976), p. 37.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

films produced depicted criminal activities as opposed to the 6,7% in Afrikaans films.¹⁴¹ However, the level of violence and criminal activities reflected in the results has to be read against the context of South Africa in the 1970s. The violence and crimes depicted in the highly praised film *District 9* (2009), for example, would have been deemed too robust for the South African market, as indicated by the Publications and Entertainments Act, No 26 of 1963 (Sub-article 10, paragraph c).¹⁴² The strict regulations imposed on South African films still limited producers in converting acceptable scripts into motion pictures. This constraint, coupled with the fact that by 1975 South Africa had only a few experienced screenwriters (such as Willie van Rensburg and C.F. Beyers-Boshoff) made the development of scripts a constantly demanding challenge.

Contracts between the SABC and Local Film Producers

Film producers, as indicated, were reassured by the Meyer Commission and the TAC that the SABC would involve local filmmakers in the development of SATV's programmes. Consequently, local producers adapted their operations to prepare for the introduction of television, so this was a factor contributing to the increase of local film production in 1975. The greatest advantage of producing a film for South African television, as opposed to cinemas, was that there were fewer financial risks involved. Income generated through cinemas was dependent on GBO figures (in other words attendance). In contrast, a contract between a producer and the SABC guaranteed the filmmaker a predetermined income.¹⁴³ The producer, consequently, had to formulate a budget according to the revenue in terms of the SABC's contract. However, many film producers felt dissatisfied with the level of involvement. For example, by 31 December 1974 the SABC had failed to approach a single local film producer regarding the production of TV dramas and/or entertainment series.¹⁴⁴ Local filmmakers, though few in number, were only contracted for the production of TV documentaries. The reason was that the SABC utilised its own production facilities as well as producers from abroad for financial reasons and their television experience, whilst also providing existing

¹⁴¹ G. Puth, *Die Inhoud en Gehalte van 'n Steekproef Suid-Afrikaanse Rolprente voor die Instelling van Televisie*, (Pretoria: Raad van Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing, 1976), p. 37.

¹⁴² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 4, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Act No 26 of 1968: "Wet op Publikasies en Vermaaklikheid", 1968, p. 116-115.

¹⁴³ If 'X' refers to total income, 'a' to income per minute, 'b' the length of the film (in minutes) and 'c' the total amount of episodes, then total payment can simply be calculated as: $X = a(b) * c$. For example, if a producer received a R100 p/minute for 7 one hour programs then the value can be determined as: $x = 100(60) * 7$. Therefore, 'X' equals R42 000.

¹⁴⁴ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV 7V. (5/3) Report, "Verslag oor S.A. Televisie en die S.A. Rolprentbedryf", December 1974, p.1.

foreign TV productions with Afrikaans soundtracks. According to *Kavalier Films*, local film producers which were employed were disappointed by the payments received from the SABC: “Only their expenses are covered, whilst no profits can be shown.”¹⁴⁵

Killarney Film Studios, a subsidiary of Satbel, produced six episodes of 15 minutes each-receiving R300 per minute.¹⁴⁶ The documentaries’ investigated South African achievements, for example Chris Barnard’s successful heart transplant. The production house, Films of Africa, received R280 per minute¹⁴⁷ for the production of 13 scientific documentaries of 30 minutes each.¹⁴⁸ Themes ranged from the study of prehistoric humans to hail and lightning. Both Killarney and Films for Africa only managed to recover their respective film production expenditures. The National Film Board (NFB) produced a series of documentaries on the locations of South African heritage. Each program was 20-30 minutes in length and the NFB also received R300 per minute.¹⁴⁹ Heyns Films received a total of R50 000¹⁵⁰ for six half-an-hour programmes (R8 500 per episode) which discussed the history of towns such as Potchefstroom and Bloemfontein.¹⁵¹ Both Heyns Films and the NFB sustained financial losses. During this period a few filmmakers began to realise the true nature of the financial damage that could be inflicted by the introduction of SATV as employment by the SABC was not guaranteed and incomes were not as large as those offered by film production for the cinema. A question which concluded a 1974 report of *Kavalier Films* (*Verslag oor S.A. Televisie en die S.A. Rolprentbedryf*), adequately summed up a local cinematic film producer’s uncertainty:

“If this really is the case, can we [filmmakers] come to the conclusion that there will be no place whatsoever for the South African [cinematic] film industry in television?”¹⁵²

Kavalier Films, 1970-1975

Kavalier Films was in its strongest financial position at the start of the 1970. All overdue dividends on preference shares were paid, whilst the company was also able to pay its first

¹⁴⁵ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV 7V. (5/3) Report, “Verslag oor S.A. Televisie en die S.A. Rolprentbedryf”, December 1974, p.1.

¹⁴⁶ Value in 2016 considering inflation: Approximately R12 700.

GLD, HBT, 191 KAV 7V. (5/3) Report, “Verslag oor S.A. Televisie en die S.A. Rolprentbedryf”, December 1974, p.2.

¹⁴⁷ Value in 2016 considering inflation: Approximately R11 900.

¹⁴⁸ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV 7V. (5/3) Report, “Verslag oor S.A. Televisie en die S.A. Rolprentbedryf”, December 1974, p.2.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Value in 2016 considering inflation: Approximately R2,1 million.

¹⁵¹ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV 7V. (5/3) Report, “Verslag oor S.A. Televisie en die S.A. Rolprentbedryf”, December 1974, p.2.

¹⁵² *Ibid.* The NFB will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

dividend in terms of common shares. This consequently enabled *Kavalier Films* to exceed its objective of releasing three films a year (the films released in 1970 included *Lied in My Hart*, *Sien Jou More*, *Die Drie van der Merwes*, *Vicky* and *A New Life*). *Kavalier Films*' preparation for SATV, although the Meyer Commission's report had yet to be completed at that stage, already began in 1970.¹⁵³ In the same year *Kavalier Films* launched an investigation into the possible effects of SATV by sending director, Elmo de Witt,¹⁵⁴ to a number of countries that had television services in place, including the USA, England, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Switzerland and Italy.¹⁵⁵ Upon his return De Witt strongly suggested that *Kavalier Films* had to incorporate the production of TV programmes into its future operations (which included the modification of its film studios), a close relationship with the SABC had to be upheld, and the field of producing advertisements and children's programmes (i.e. animation) had to be considered as an option.¹⁵⁶ *Kavalier Films* subsequently adapted its older films to be compatible for television broadcasts and a project was launched to accumulate stories and/or scripts which could be converted into programmes suitable for television. Furthermore, upon the instructions of Chairperson, Schalk J. Botha, *Kavalier Films* maintained its speed of production as a means of building up television experience, whilst also allowing the company to be in a "stable financial position" once SATV arrived.¹⁵⁷

These strategies differed entirely from those adopted by Jamie Uys (Mimosa Films) as he was adamant that Afrikaans cinematic film producers should continue production by focusing on quality rather than quantity. This approach would enhance the chances of international distribution, as demonstrated by *Lost in the Desert* and *Beautiful People*. However, the disappointing box office returns on films such as *The Hellions*, coupled with *Kavalier Films*' failure to promote and market its products internationally in 1969 and 1970, convinced its Board of Directors to focus the bulk of its attention on the production of films aimed at the South African market.¹⁵⁸ Exceptions were, nonetheless, made when stories or scripts were obtained that were deemed to be of international quality. In 1975, for example, *Kavalier Films*

¹⁵³ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 4. (1/20) Chairman's Report: "Voorsitterverslag vir die jaar gerverslag vir die jaar geëindig", 30 June 1970, p. 2.

¹⁵⁴ He retired from *Kavalier Films* in 1973.

¹⁵⁵ Italy at the time had yet to introduce a colour TV system. GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 7V. (5/5) Meeting between Board of Directors: "Verslag van Televisie-toer", 25 September 1970, p. 1-9.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9-10.

¹⁵⁷ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 4. (1/20) Chairman's Report: "Voorsitterverslag vir die jaar gerverslag vir die jaar geëindig", 30 June 1970, p. 2.

¹⁵⁸ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 4. (1/22) Chairman's Report: "Voorsitterverslag vir die jaar gerverslag vir die jaar geëindig", 26 November 1971, p. 1.

bought the film rights to Wilbur Smith's *The Diamond Hunters*.¹⁵⁹ Feeling optimistic and wanting to exploit the film's full economic potential, the Board of Directors employed international actors, Hayley Mills, David McCallum and Jon Cypher. The feature, directed by Dirk de Villiers, was released as *Diamond Hunters* in South Africa, whilst being internationally distributed as *The Kingfisher Caper* by the Cinema Shares International Distribution Corporation.¹⁶⁰

On 23 February 1975 *Kavalier Films* celebrated its 21st anniversary.¹⁶¹ Schalk J. Botha, whilst praising not only the company but also the Afrikaner's engagement in the economy, stated:

"In addition to the fact that the country had experienced unprecedented economic growth within this [21-year] period, it was also a time in which the Afrikaans-speaking section of our population had for the first time taken a leading role in the business world of our country ... Looking back at the past twenty-one years, I can boldly state with pride that *Kavalier Films* also made an important contribution to the economic aspirations of the Afrikaner."¹⁶²

A large portion of *Kavalier Films*' success should be attributed to its close connection with the government. During the 1970s *Kavalier Films* maintained its relationship with government – a period, according to Leon van Nierop, known for local productions dealing with South African military themes.¹⁶³ But this also meant that some production were completely discarded as their contents diverged from the political ambitions of government.

“Die Storie op dun ys!”¹⁶⁴ and *Ses Soldate*¹⁶⁵ (1975)

The screenplay for *The Liberators* was never filmed as government feared that its subject matters could damage South Africa's diplomatic relations with other African states. Ivan Hall, screenwriter and a director of Kavaliers, provided a summary of the film in 1972: a president from an African state (not specified) is captured by communists in an effort to establish a new ideological regime in place of the existing capitalist dispensation. Five South Africans are

¹⁵⁹ Smith was a renowned South African novelist. The internationally acclaimed film *Gold* (1975) was based on his work. 191 GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 4. (1/22) Chairman's Report: "Voorsitterverslag vir die jaar gerverslag vir die jaar geëindig", 26 November 1971, p. 1.

¹⁶⁰ A US company.

¹⁶¹ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 4. (1/32) Chairman's Report: "Voorsitterverslag vir die jaar gerverslag vir die jaar geëindig", 28 November 1975, p. 1.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ Leon van Nierop, *Daar Doer in die Fliek: 'n Persoonlike Blik op die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Rolprent*, (Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2016), p. 185.

¹⁶⁴ "The story is on thin ice!" The quote refers to a statement made by H.B. Thom on the controversy around *The Liberators*.

¹⁶⁵ *Six Soldiers*.

instructed to rescue the president and effectively restore capitalism in the country, subsequently resulting in a reversal of the communist initiative. Hall defined the film as depicting a “struggle between imperialism and communism.”¹⁶⁶ However, submitting the proposal to management, Kavalier’s Board of Directors felt the Publications Control Board might deem the film as being too controversial in the political context of the 1970s, when South Africa’s foreign policy towards African states was being reconsidered by then Prime Minister, B.J. Vorster. *The Liberators* depiction of the attempted halting of communism’s expansion was not the source of controversy. P.R. Nel, Vice-Chairman of *Kavaliers* and future mayor of Pretoria, explained the actual problem: “We would be blamed for making a mockery of the African countries and I suggest that the script should be submitted to the government.”¹⁶⁷

The 1970s was a politically complicated decade for the NP government as foreign hostility towards apartheid increased. The world had been shifting ideologically since the end of the Second World War, with Western states being committed to ending colonialism and the systematic violation of human rights; the establishment of intergovernmental organisations such as the United Nations in 1945 serves as an example.¹⁶⁸ As a result, South Africa sharpened its defensive strategies in an endeavour to justify apartheid in a changing and increasingly liberal climate in order to ensure and maintain foreign relations and investments. However, foreign pressure intensified after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 and this played an increasingly significant role in undermining the apartheid political-economy in the 1980s. Even though internal and external pressures were escalating, hostility towards apartheid did not affect the country’s economic performance in absolute terms before the oil embargo applied by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1973.¹⁶⁹

The lack of effect was reinforced in 1962 when the United Nations failed to impose economic and other sanctions against South Africa. The UN General Assembly passed a non-binding resolution (1761) to establish the UN Special Committee against Apartheid. However, Western states did not support these suggested sanctions, ultimately boycotting the committee. Other examples include the failure of the UK-based Anti-Apartheid Movement, which arranged an international conference in London in April 1964 – the International Conference for Economic

¹⁶⁶ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.1.4.49 Agendas: “Direksievergaderingsnotule”, 4 October 1972, p. 49.

¹⁶⁷ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.1.4.49 Agendas: “Direksievergaderingsnotule”, 4 October 1972, p. 49.

¹⁶⁸ Pitman B. Potter, “The United Nations, 1945-1949”, *The American Journal of International Law* 43 (1949), p. 756.

¹⁶⁹ Philip I. Levy, “Sanctions on South Africa: What Did They Do?”, *The American Economic Review* 89 (1999), p. 415.

Sanctions Against South Africa. However, the conference failed to persuade the British government to enforce sanctions and by 1965 the movement had lost its momentum. Britain's rejection was premised on the fact that economic sanctions could risk its economic interests in South Africa. South Africa's economy had also recovered from the crisis caused by the Sharpeville protest. Initially, investors lost their confidence in the NP's ability to sustain political stability with the gold and exchange reserves decreasing by 50%, whilst the capital outflow was over \$16.8 million per month in 1960-61.¹⁷⁰ By 1965 confidence in South Africa's economy seemed to be restored, with large sums of capital entering the country. South Africa's annual GDP reflected this change: from 1950-1963 and 1962-1964, the average annual increase stood at an estimated 4.9% and 7.5% respectively an average increase of 2.6%.¹⁷¹ Thus by the time of the production proposal for *The Liberators* South Africa's government still held the view that it could uphold positive relations with Westernised states and as such ensure economic prosperity. By 1965 South Africa had recovered from the economic turmoil of 1960-61; most English-speaking whites accepted South Africa as a republic; the sanctions and boycotts had little to no effect on South Africa's economy; internal liberation movements/uprisings seemed to lose their momentum; and lastly, the country was building up the largest military power on the continent.

After the assassination of Hendrik Verwoerd on 6 September 1966, however, Prime Minister BJ Vorster (in office from 1966-1978) maintained that South Africa must adapt to the transitioning international political climate – but on its own terms. Jacobus A. du Pisani argues that “in the changed climate after the period of decolonisation it was no longer possible to talk, as Hertzog was still able to do, of the “backlogs” of black people compared to white people”¹⁷² Instead, B.J. Vorster's cabinet emphasized that separate development is premised on the differences amongst blacks and whites rather than racial ‘inequalities’. Vorster would develop a new foreign policy, which was contested by many within the National Party's inner circle. However, the structures of the NP guaranteed the Prime Minister extraordinary power, thus allowing Vorster to implement these policies/strategies. The PM concluded that healthy diplomatic relations with other African states must be sustained, whilst simultaneously acting as the USA's strongest ally in Africa during the Cold War (1947-1991).

¹⁷⁰ David C. Dalcanton, “Vorster and the Politics of Confidence 1966-1974”, *African Affairs* 75 (1976), p. 164.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² Jakobus A. Du Pisani, “BJ Vorster as voltooiër van JBM Hertzog se visie oor gebiedskeiding in Suid-Afrika”, *Joernaal vir Eietydse Geskiedenis* 34 (2009), p. 60.

If the African states could be persuaded to approve of South Africa's domestic policies, other countries might relax their hostility towards the policy of separate development in South Africa. Early in his term as Prime Minister Vorster focused the attention of cabinet on the needs of African states, offering economic co-operation after countries such as Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland gained independence. This orientation was a response founded on South Africa's deteriorating balance of trade. In 1970 the state experienced a trade deficit of nearly \$571 million and hence required a stable potential market for South African exports.¹⁷³ To establish ties with other African states (through large-scale trade) would prove to be an arduous undertaking because of South Africa's racial legislation. The government, therefore, developed a strategy through means of dialogue focusing on states such as Malawi, the Malagasy Republic and particularly the Ivory Coast. Firstly, the state argued that South Africa should be regarded as a country rooted in Africa. As David C. Dalcanton argues: "Here was the realization that South Africa was not *in* Africa but *of* Africa."¹⁷⁴ Secondly, South Africa emphasized the point of mutual understanding. If South Africa is to offer economic co-operation, both parties must adopt a policy of non-interference thus safeguarding trade regardless of a state's internal policies. South Africa, an economic and mineral giant of the continent, utilized its leverage to achieve diplomatic results. As such, the diplomatic objectives meant that the South African government needed to avoid damaging the image of African states this the reason for Kavaliers' reluctance to produce *The Liberators*.

Kavalier Film Production's script committee scheduled a meeting for 30 November 1972 to discuss the possibility of turning the script into a film.¹⁷⁵ The general reaction was overwhelmingly negative as Managing Director, Ben Vlok, explained:

"The script in its current form cannot be filmed as the language and action scenes are too robust; the cruelty will not be approved by the Publication Board; and the South African government might be sensitive about the contents of the script and, as such, might respond negatively for fear that international relations could be disturbed."¹⁷⁶

However, the script was not completely discarded as Kavaliers' secretary T Winterbach argued that there was still a possibility of box office success because of the controversy. On the 30 March 1973 *Kavaliers* held a decisive board meeting to ultimately resolve the future of *The*

¹⁷³ David C. Dalcanton, "Vorster and the Politics of Confidence 1966-1974", *African Affairs* 75 (1976), 166.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

¹⁷⁵ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.1.4.51 Agendas: "Draaiboek Komitee-vergaderingsnotule", 30 November 1972, p. 2.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

Liberators after consulting both the government and the South African Defence Force. The South African military was a key role player if the film was to be produced, since it possessed the essential military equipment for such a production. Vlok argued that numerous state departments, including the Department of Trade and Industry, resisted the production and consequently would not provide their support. Colonel Kiro-Smith labelled the script as “completely unacceptable” and would not provide the military equipment needed to film the production.¹⁷⁷ Left with no alternative, *Kavaliers* finally decided to abandon the production of *The Liberators*, yet again illustrating the power that the state exercised over the film industry.

In April 1974 *Kavaliers* discussed the possibility of producing a film revolving around the South African Defence Force and its involvement in the South African Border War (1966-1989), preliminarily entitled *Weermagstorie*.¹⁷⁸ Experience, however, indicated that a narrative involving the South African military required the approval and support of the Minister of Defence, P.W. Botha. Bertand Retief, who was appointed director of the motion picture, provided a draft summary to the Minister and reported that Botha permitted the production on condition that “certain conditions must be met. The issue is currently being investigated by the army and, if the case has merit, then there would be no objections regarding the filming of the story. Once the green light has been given, attention will be given to the screenplay.”¹⁷⁹ *Kavaliers* realised a film dealing with themes related to the war and the South African military required extensive planning since the border war was perceived as paramount in safeguarding the Afrikaner nationalists’ White Laager.

The South African Border War/Angolan Bush War (1966-1989) was a 23-year conflict fought in South West Africa and Angola. South Africa and its allied forces, such as the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), engaged in war against the South West Africa People’s Organization (SWAPO), the independent Angolan government (MPLA and FNLA),¹⁸⁰ Cuban forces, and the ANC’s military wing uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK). The causes of war were threefold: a human rights struggle against the apartheid policy of institutionalised racial discrimination against blacks; an anti-colonial war of liberation against South Africa’s political occupation; and a confrontation within the framework of the political and economic

¹⁷⁷ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.1.4.51 Agendas: “Direksievergaderingsnotule”, 30 March 1973, p. 85.

¹⁷⁸ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.1.4.51 Agendas: “Direksievergaderingsnotule”, 26 April 1974, p. 177.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola and National Front for the Liberation of Angola.

ideological dispute (communistic Bloc vs the free/democratic Western states) of the Cold War.¹⁸¹

The first years of the Border war (1966-1974) could best be described, according to Leopoldt Scholtz, as a “low-intensity-conflict” by the time the proposal for *Weermagstorie* (later *Ses Soldate*) was submitted.¹⁸² Angola’s independence (November 1975), the start of the Angolan Civil War and South Africa’s first large-scale military invasion of Angola in 1975/76 were yet to transpire. Although the war was yet to reach its fighting climax, a film propagating the strength of the South African Defence Force and the controversial conscription campaign was deemed a necessity by the government. Since the end of the Second World War South Africa’s military power had declined as a result of the large-scale exodus of experienced English-speaking officers. Minister of Defence, Frans Erasmus (1948-1959) should be held responsible for this, as his ambition was to rid the military of any “British influence” by retrenching English-speaking officers and appointing Afrikaners in their place. In addition, the military’s weaponry was largely outdated since they were used in the Second World War.¹⁸³ Hence by the 1960s South Africa was attempting to strengthen its Defence Force by means of enforced military conscription and modernisation of its weaponry. The Defence Amendment Bill, passed on 9 June 1967, stipulated that all white South African males between the ages of 17-65 years had to serve in the SADF or SAP for a period of at least nine months (compulsory national military service was extended to 12 months in 1972).¹⁸⁴ The need for military conscription could not be underestimated from a nationalist’s point of view. Compared to most Western powers, South Africa’s white population (1 700 000 males) was too small for a voluntary system to be effective. According to Leopold Scholtz, the country’s military was “converted into a highly mobile and experienced” unit in a space of a few years.¹⁸⁵ South Africa immediately positioned itself as the strongest military force on the continent and would subsequently form a diplomatic partnership with the USA in an effort to stem the expansion of communism in Africa. Understandably, the legislation was a cause of dismay, particularly amongst English-speaking males, with organisations such as the End Conscription Campaign (1983) established in years to follow to resist incorporation into the Defence Force. The state

¹⁸¹ Leopold Scholtz, *Die SAW in die Grensoorlog, 1966-1989*, (Kaapstad: Tafelberg Uitgewers 2013), p. 5.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁸³ Leopold Scholtz, *Die SAW in die Grensoorlog, 1966-1989*, (Kaapstad: Tafelberg Uitgewers 2013), p. 7.

¹⁸⁴ Graeme Callister, “Patriotic Duty or Resented Imposition? Public Reactions to Military Conscription in White South Africa, 1952-1972”, *South African Journal of Military Studies* 35 (2007), p. 46.

¹⁸⁵ Leopold Scholtz, *Die SAW in die Grensoorlog, 1966-1989*, (Kaapstad: Tafelberg Uitgewers, 2013), p. 8.

therefore had to justify its aims regarding conscription and the anti-liberation war to guarantee white political support. A memorandum drafted by the VVRSA later stated:

“SA is the one country in which the making of [military] films is a complete necessity, considering that war is being waged on our own doorstep [‘voorportaal’].”¹⁸⁶

The proposed production replicated the experiences of soldiers in the South African Defence Force and the latter’s involvement in the war against the guerrilla forces on the northern border. The film’s main objective was to motivate young South Africans to accept and support military conscription during the war by promoting a sense of camaraderie amongst South African soldiers. Renowned film writer, Leon van Nierop (*Daar Doer in die Fliek* [2011], *Wolwedans in die Skemer* [2012] and *Ballade vir ‘n Enkeling* [2015]) says that he marvels at how *Ses Soldate* distorted a soldier’s actual experiences in the SA army:

“my military training, in the same bungalow where the film was shot and on the same parade ground where we were nearly drilled to death, was never as funny, enjoyable, encouraging, pleasant or merry as depicted in *Ses Soldate*.”¹⁸⁷

The narrative is based on the experiences of four South African recruits, Richard ‘Soutie’¹⁸⁸ Henderson (Richard Loring), Gottlieb ‘Liebling’ van Lieres (Lieb Bester), ‘Tiny’ Smit (Ken Hare) and Petrus ‘Poepies’ Pansegrau (Friedrich Stark), who are conscripted at the Danie Theron Combat school in Kimberley. Whilst in intensive training under ‘Sergeant’, played by Barry Trengove, the conscripts form an enduring friendship. The recruits, including the Sergeant-Major, all volunteer for border duty, where they are accompanied by a black tracker Chico (Sydney Chama) and sent on patrol. The soldiers come across a horrific scene as they arrive at a Namibian farm where a whole family was brutally murdered by the enemy. Enemy fire destroyed their radio, disconnecting the soldiers from base camp and military support. The six soldiers are ultimately required to track their way back to the camp, whilst having to withstand severe attacks from the enemy. They eventually do arrive at the camp, but some have died in the skirmishes.

On 30 May 1974 Chairman of the script committee, H.B. Thom, stated to the Board of Directors that he had the opportunity to discuss the future of the production of the film with PW Botha

¹⁸⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 2, Memorandum of the VVRSA: “Voorlegging oor Vollengte Rolprente”, 9 June 1981, p. 1.

¹⁸⁷ Leon van Nierop, “Gesiedenis van die Afrikaanse rolprent, Gister en Vandag: Die Jare 70 se propaganda-rolprente”. Peterjasie, Accessed: August 15, 2016: <http://peterjasie.co.za/rolprent8.html>.

¹⁸⁸ An Afrikaans word used by Afrikaners to describe English-speaking South Africans.

and Commandant General Hugo Bierman of the SADF. Both Botha and Bierman reasoned that the film could be politically beneficial and supported continued production, provided that *Kavaliers* construct a message that “promotes the [South African] military amongst the public.”¹⁸⁹ A screenplay, initially called the “Die Vyf Soldate” but later retitled *Ses Soldate*, was produced and released in 1975 as a docudrama, directed by Bertand Retief, distributed by Ster Films and sponsored by Sanlam. Producing *Ses Soldate* as a docudrama meant that it could be used as an effective propaganda medium as it blends fact and fiction, offering a dramatized re-enactment of actual events. Tom W. Hoffer and Richard A. Nelson describe a docudrama as a “catalyst for social awareness”.¹⁹⁰ The reason is that, in comparison to traditional documentaries, the emphasis in a docudrama is on narration and personality. By incorporating themes based on actual events, whilst providing dramatic embellishment, producers can reach an audience beyond those who watch traditional documentaries.

A docudrama’s power lies in its ability to manipulate the emotions of the viewer by means of connecting the individual with actuality or the “historical substance of pre-filmic events.”¹⁹¹ It serves the same purpose as a biographical novel. *Schindler’s Ark*, written by Thomas Keneally, published in 1982 and later converted into the film *Schindler’s List* (1993), demonstrates the levels of psychological influence when historical details are reimagined to fit the artistic/cinematic needs of the writer/producer. The *historical substance* of a docudrama allows the audience to reason that though the events depicted are not based on actual events, similar scenarios could have existed. This can make the film form effective, yet dangerous, depending on the fairness and interpretation of the presentation. The scene in *Ses Soldate*, for example, which depicts the six South African soldiers coming across a family brutally murdered by the enemy would reconfirm fears triggered by the threat of communism. This would consequently support continuous military engagement, whilst simultaneously encouraging white nationalists to distance themselves from South African and SWA liberation movements. *Ses Soldate* demonstrates Kavaliers’s aptitude in exploiting the socio-political environment to remain financially viable. As H.B. Thom exalted: “We [*Kavalier Films*] must use our contacts [in government] to full effect and not disappoint the confidence placed in the company.”¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.1.4.51 Agendas, “Direksievergaderingsnotule”, 30 May 1974, p. 184.

¹⁹⁰ Tom W. Hoffer & Richards A. Nelson, “Docudrama on American Television”, *Journal of the University Film Association* 30 (1978), p. 21.

¹⁹¹ Steven N. Lipkin, “Real Emotional Logic: Persuasive Strategies in Docudrama”, *Cinema Journal* 38 (1999), p. 68-85.

¹⁹² GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.1.4.51 Agendas: “Direksievergaderingsnotule”, 30 May 1974, p. 183.

However, *Kavalier Films*' symbiotic ideological relationship with government did not safeguard them against the impact of the introduction of television in South Africa. *Kavalier Films*' 21st anniversary celebration was, therefore, short-lived. Despite engaging in talks with the SABC, *Kavalier Films* still felt uncertain about what its exact role would be once SATV had been introduced, a feeling (as indicated) shared amongst most local film producers at the time. The Board of Directors consequently decided that a division dedicated to the development of TV programmes would be established after the official TV service had commenced.¹⁹³ Concern amongst filmmakers only increased after the SABC's experimental broadcasts began. *Kavalier Films*' research estimated that cinema attendance had dropped by approximately 20% from May 1975 to December 1975 and that cinema attendance could decrease by a further 45% in 1977.¹⁹⁴ *Kavalier Films*, in conjunction with the *Vereniging van Vollengte Rolprentvervaardigers*, argued that the government subsidy system should be amended after 1976, so as to enhance support and protection against the threat posed by the South African television service.¹⁹⁵

Distribution and Exhibition, 1970 - 1976

After Satbel acquired Twentieth-Century-Fox's South African cinematic film shares in 1969, it reorganised its interests, which were categorised into four phases.¹⁹⁶ Phase three, simply known as "Preparation before Television", commenced immediately after the government's announcement that SATV would be introduced.¹⁹⁷ Satbel's preparation entailed an investigation into foreign case studies, a significant reduction of cinema seats, the modification of cinemas, and the horizontal integration of its cinematic film interests.¹⁹⁸ Satbel remained realistic – at least in the light of the foreign models – in the sense that it recognised that SATV would have significant consequences and that recovery would require effective preparation. For example, the average annual cinema attendance in the USA declined by 71% (as indicated) from 1948 to 1968, whilst the industry recovered (in terms of GBO revenue) only after the mid-

¹⁹³ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 4. (1/32) Chairman Report: "Voorsitterverslag vir die jaar geëindig", 28 November 1975, p. 1.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ Phases one and two are discussed in Chapter Two, whilst phase four will be expanded upon in the next chapter.

¹⁹⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 2, Correspondence of Sanlam: "Rasionalisasie van die teaterbedryf in Suid-Afrika", 14 January 1970, p. 4.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.* Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 164.

1970s.¹⁹⁹ The degree of SATV's impact on the exhibition industry was largely dependent on the number of TV sets available, the nature and quality of the programmes (foreign experiences seemed to indicate that commercial TV often increases quality), the novelty of the TV-service and the cost (the TV set and licence fee), and the time at which certain TV programmes were broadcast. MANKOR Beleggings Ltd. (Mankor) estimated that Ster Films' and Kinekor's cinema attendance could drop to 50% for conventional in-house cinemas and to 50% for drive-in theatres after 18 months if 500 000 TV sets were sold locally (depending, of course, on the quality of programmes and the number of feature films played on SATV), admission prices and tax laws remained unchanged, and there was no rationalisation.²⁰⁰ Based on these calculations, the combined profits of Ster and Kinekor would decrease by 98-138%, meaning the companies would operate at a loss.²⁰¹

After investigating the foreign examples, the most obvious measure to mitigate the damage inflicted by SATV was to allow a period for distributors to circulate a feature film across South African cinemas; only after exploiting the film's full economic, cinematic potential, should the SABC be permitted to incorporate the feature into their programming. Some foreign producers and distributors allowed TV services to exhibit a feature film only if it was ten to fifteen years old.²⁰² However, Satbel maintained that these examples were too extreme and would be harmful to the early development of South Africa's television industry. Cinematic rights in South Africa generally lasted three to five years (depending on the contracts negotiated amongst producers, distributors and exhibitors). SABC-TV, which foreign producers labelled as "free TV", could only obtain broadcasting rights two to three years after South African cinemas.²⁰³ The Motion Picture Export Association (MPEA) extended the period to eight years after the launch of M-Net. Satbel and Sanso argued that the high monthly fixed costs involved in managing a cinema made the reduction of the number of cinemas the most effective option as supply, in the current situation, would exceed demand in the country.²⁰⁴ Furthermore, the

¹⁹⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 3, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 7, Correspondence from P. Wolmarans: "Ondersoek na die Suid-Afrikaanse rolprentverspreidings- en vertoningsbedryf", 7 April 1981, p. 20.

²⁰⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1A, Memorandum provided to the Meyer Commission: "Mankor Beleggings Bpk: Verslag namens Kinekor en Ster Organisasies", March 1970, p. 7-8.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 14, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 2, Memorandum provided by Ster-Kinekor: "S.A. Rolprent-bedryf: Rolprentverspreiding en Vertoning", August 1988, p. 142.

²⁰⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1A, Memorandum provided to the Meyer Commission: "Mankor Beleggings Bpk: Verslag namens Kinekor en Ster Organisasies", March 1970, p. 4.

“outdated and old-fashioned theatres with high numbers of seats” had to be replaced by modern, smaller and luxurious cinemas that allowed Satbel to charge higher admission prices, thus neutralising a decline in cinema attendance.²⁰⁵ Approximately R10 million,²⁰⁶ for example, was spend on modifying Kinekor’s cinemas.²⁰⁷ Though the number of Satbel’s cinemas decreased, Kinekor and Ster still functioned as separate and competing operations until 1977.

Satbel (like Sanlam) was vertically integrated between 1970-1975, managing business subsidiaries,²⁰⁸ including, for example, screen advertising companies. At the time, screen advertising was the only audio-visual advertisement medium available in South Africa. Revenue gained from cinema commercials was calculated according to annual cinema attendance. As such, when commercial TV was introduced, the revenue of screen advertising decreased significantly as television provided businesses with a new and – very important – popular audio-visual mechanism to advertise their products. According to Mankor, in foreign countries commercial TV services received up to 50% of their total revenue from advertising.²⁰⁹ Mankor estimated that if Satbel failed to reorganise its screen advertising interests, then screen advertising revenue would drop by 75%.²¹⁰ Consequently, Satbel’s screen advertising companies, i.e. Ster Adfilms, Alexander Films and Filmlets, were merged in 1971 to create Cinemark.²¹¹ According to Keyan Tomaselli, Satbel expected the merger, without increasing the screen advertising staff, to provide enhanced screen access to the advertiser.²¹² Satbel further diversified its operations as a countermeasure for the introduction of SATV in 1976. In 1973, for example, Satbel entered the South African music industry by establishing

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.* This was a tactic used in the USA until the 1960s.

²⁰⁶ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R500 million.

²⁰⁷ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 165.

²⁰⁸ Included Killarney Film Studios, Irene Film Laboratories, a 50% share in Boswell Circus and AFC Merchandise to name a few.

²⁰⁹ This includes all forms of advertisement. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1A, Memorandum provided to the Meyer Commission: “Mankor Beleggings Bpk: Verslag namens Kinekor en Ster Organisasies”, March 1970, p. 5.

²¹⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 12, Addendum: N101/3/4/1, Volume 1A, Memorandum provided to the Meyer Commission: “Mankor Beleggings Bpk: Verslag namens Kinekor en Ster Organisasies”, March 1970, p. 6.

²¹¹ Cinemark, “Cinemark: About Us”, Accessed: October 18, 2016: <http://cinemark.co.za/>.

²¹² Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 164.

the Record and Tape Company (Pty.) Limited.²¹³ Meanwhile, in 1974 Anglo-American Life acquired the Schlesinger Organisation's interests in both Satbel and Sanso.²¹⁴

Apart from the introduction of SATV, Satbel had to reorganise its cinematic film interests as local competition within the South African distribution and exhibition industry intensified. "Stronger competition within the industry" emerged when André Pieterse, a key contributor to the establishment and development of the Afrikaans cinematic film industry, left Ster Films as a managing director and established Film Trust. Pieterse would also produce one of the few internationally acclaimed South African feature films, *E'lollipop* or *Forever Young, Forever Free*, in 1975.²¹⁵ By 1970 MGM managed three Metro cinemas (which were owned by Sanso); however, these properties were later demolished. MGM subsequently merged with Film Trust, which provided Pieterse's company with the exclusive rights to distribute and exhibit MGM's films before its competitors. Pieterse later became Executive Vice-President of MGM International Incorporation. By 1975 Film Trust had constructed 18 Metro cinemas across South Africa.²¹⁶ However, MGM's film production had decreased significantly and in 1973 MGM sold its foreign interests to Cinema International Corporation (CIC), a company established by Universal Studios and Paramount Pictures. Cinema International was, therefore, a 50% shareholder of Film Trust and also guaranteed playing time at CIC Film Trust's cinemas.²¹⁷ This manoeuvre meant that Satbel did not have exclusive rights in distributing motion pictures produced by Paramount Pictures or Universal Studios. In summary, Cintrust, owned by Film Trust (50%) and CIC (50%), which was a holding company for the Metro cinemas, obtained the right to exhibit productions of Paramount Pictures, Universal Studios, MGM and later Warner Brothers International²¹⁸ by January of 1976. Prominent foreign companies that were contractually aligned with Satbel included Twentieth-Century-Fox, Anglo-EMI, United Artists, the Rank Organisation and the Walt Disney Company. Table 19

²¹³ SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, Meeting between Sanlam's Board of Directors: "Satbel", 23 January 1974, p. 14.

²¹⁴ Anglo-American, therefore, obtained 30% shares of Satbel and 50% of Sanso. SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, Meeting between Sanlam's Board of Directors: "Satbel, FVB en Kersaf", 19 September 1984, p. 1.

²¹⁵ The film was distributed internationally as *Forever Young, Forever Free* by Columbia-Warner. Andre le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 159.

²¹⁶ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 162.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

²¹⁸ Concluded a distribution contract with CIC.

illustrates the number of cinemas and drive-in theatres owned by Satbel, Cintrust and Independent cinema owners.

Table 19:²¹⁹ Number of In-door Cinemas and Drive-In Theatres owned by Satbel, Cintrust and Independent Cinema Owners in January 1976			
Company	In-door Cinemas	Drive-in Theatres	Total
Ster (Satbel)	38	21	59
Kinekor (Satbel)	70	23	93
Cintrust	20	1	21
Independent	344	134	478

Conclusion

Preparation for television was especially crucial within the South African context considering that the continued existence of the local cinematic film industry was heavily dependent on the country's small white audience – a market targeted by the SABC and that had the economic means to acquire or at least rent a TV set. What becomes evident when studying the South African cinematic film industry from 1970 to 1975, however, is that film producers were far less certain of how to prepare for SATV than local distributors and exhibitors were. This uncertainty was manifested despite the industry's opportunity to examine foreign cinematic industries as case studies – an option that many Western, industrialised countries did not have. In hindsight, the film production industry – or at least those whose future operations were dependent on the cooperation of the SABC in and after 1976 – found it difficult to prepare since they were uncertain of what their exact roles would be once SATV was introduced. Local distributors and exhibitors, on the other hand, who were far less dependent on government

²¹⁹ From the *Financial Mail*, 30 January 1976, p. 219, cited in Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 169.

support and on the SABC, had a much clearer framework within which to prepare (illustrated by Satbel's reorganisation). However, as SATV had yet to be implemented and considering that all countries have unique socio-economic contexts, distributors and exhibitors could, just like local producers, only speculate on the true impact of television. The local film production industry, despite its uncertainty, nonetheless attempted to prepare for television (substantiated by the number of local films produced in 1975). Yet what becomes abundantly clear is that the most significant challenges which faced the film production industry during the 1960s were still evident in the following decade. Apart from a few exceptions (such as films produced by André Pieterse and Jamie Uys), the impact of, for example, the government subsidy scheme and government control, the themes incorporated into the films, the size of the niche market, censorship and consequent lack of scripts), and the financial resources of production companies led to most South African feature films being of an inferior quality compared to foreign productions. All these factors, in conclusion, meant that South Africa's cinematic distribution and exhibition industry were much better prepared than local cinematic filmmakers were. This condition became even more evident during and after 1976, considering the decrease in the number of Afrikaans films produced and selected for cinematic distribution and exhibition.

Chapter Five: The Influence of South African Television on the Afrikaans Cinematic Film Industry, c.1976 – c.1986

“Theories of action, by definition, are abstractions that simplify in the interest of action. The content of the abstractions derives from socialization experiences that reflect the ideology of the organization” – Karl E.

Weick¹

Introduction

After discussing the socio-economic and political conditions in which the Afrikaans cinematic film industry was established and developed, the history of the SABC and the preparation for SATV (by both the public broadcaster and the local cinematic industry), and its advent, the influence of television can finally be investigated and reflected upon. Chapter Five is divided into three sections. First, the advancement of SATV will be demonstrated within two timeframes: 1976 to 1980, and 1981 (when the “Bantu” TV service was introduced) to September 1986, i.e. the last month before the launch of M-Net. The aim of this section is to expand on SABC-TV’s broadcasts and the forces that shaped the former in an attempt to demonstrate why the Afrikaans cinematic film industry was so greatly influenced. The attention will focus on programme content, and financial and technical aspects. This will be followed by a consideration of the immediate effects of television on the Afrikaans cinematic film industry. Covering the years 1976 and 1977, this section particularly highlights the amendment of the subsidy scheme, the relationship between the SABC and local producers, the role of the *Vereniging van Vollengte Rolprentvervaardigers* and Satbel’s implementation of phase four. The third section deals with the timeframe 1978-1986 and looks at the role and effectiveness of the state’s intervention, a case study expanding on the struggle between the private sector and the National Film Board (of which a short history is provided) to demonstrate the financial distress experienced by the Afrikaans cinematic film industry post-1976, the function fulfilled by Afrikaners in the rise of South Africa’s “Bantu” or ethnic cinema as ethnic cinema became increasingly prominent as a result of Television’s influence, the effects of SATV on *Kavalier Films*, the continued international success experienced by Mimosa Films despite SATV’s introduction, the incorporation of TV programmes into Afrikaans cinematic productions, and whether Satbel recovered from the effects of Television. A discussion of the films *Broer Matie* (1984) and *Boetie gaan Border toe* (1984) ends this section and the chapter.

The Introduction and Development of South African Television, 1976-1980

¹ Karl E. Weick, *Sensemaking in Organizations* (London: SAGE Publications, 1995), p. 123.

Prime Minister B.J. Vorster officially opened South Africa's national television service (SABC-TV) on 5 January 1976.² The TV service schedule devoted equal broadcasting times for Afrikaans and English programmes and broadcast for 37 hours per week (18:00 to 23:00 CAT).³ Considering the "dangerous times" of the late 1970s, the SABC broadcast programmes designed to educate the South African public through entertainment, while emphasising the importance of South Africa's "spiritual, economic and military resilience."⁴ Examples of programmes which promoted the ambitions of the government, included a broadcast of CBS's *Face the Nation* in which B.J. Vorster addressed questions on the political policy of South Africa, documentaries on the South African Navy and Hendrik Verwoerd, and journal programmes (such as *Kamera 1*, *Galaxy* and *Looking In*) discussing, for instance, the South African Defence Force and economic affairs. Reminiscent of the views in Jamie Uys's films, *Hans en die Rooinek* and *Lord Oom Piet*, the SABC maintained that broadcasting English and Afrikaans programmes on a single channel enhanced the relationship between, and social cooperation amongst, South Africa's white communities.⁵ The first local movie specifically designed for SATV, produced by Manie van Rensburg⁶ and written by Pieter de Bruyn, was *Oom Willem en die Lord* was broadcast on 9 January 1976 at 21:00 CAT.⁷ Films such as *Oom Willem en die Lord* are known as "TV movies" as they were not produced for cinematic distribution and exhibition.⁸ Other examples of TV movies produced in the 1970s included *Nicolene* (1978) and *Elsa se Geheim* (1979). Interviews, journal programmes and documentaries designed to promote the historical heritage of South Africa's different racial groups, for instance, included *1820 and All That* (English-speaking South Africans), *A Sense of Destiny* (Afrikaners), *Under the Southern Cross* ("Coloureds"), as well as celebrations of the Transkei's independence in 1976. Transkei was one of two "homelands" (the other being Ciskei) created by the South African government for Xhosa-speaking Africans in the Cape Province (now Eastern Cape) granted nominal autonomy in 1963; this was opposed by the

² Presenters Heinrich Maritz and Dorianne Berry welcomed South African viewers to the SABC-TV's first national broadcast.

³ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1976, p. 92.

⁴ The increase in foreign hostility towards South Africa, the Border War and the country's internal political turmoil, to name a few. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1976, p. 16.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁶ Manie van Rensburg, an Afrikaans director and writer, would become renowned for feature films of a progressive nature, with *Taxi to Soweto* (1991) arguably the most famous.

⁷ Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC* (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 106.

⁸ These films will be referred to as "TV movies" to avoid confusion between films specifically designed for television and films which were made for and distributed in cinemas, and broadcast on SATV at a later stage.

ANC (banned at the time) as it consolidated the interests of apartheid-oriented separate development.⁹ Programmes designed to educate South Africa's children included *Wielie-Walie*, *Everywhere Express* and the ever-popular *Haas Das se Nuuskas*.¹⁰ Examples of religious programmes included *Oordenking* and *Thy Kingdom Come*. The All Blacks Rugby tour,¹¹ the 1976 Olympic Games and the Grand Prix are a few examples of sporting events broadcast by the SABC at this time. Examples of programmes devoted to music included *Musiek vir Almal* and *Pop Shop*.¹²

American TV productions, such as *Dallas*, *Magnum P.I.* and *Who's the Boss* accounted for the largest share of programmes purchased abroad, largely as a way of counteracting the British Equity Ban. Equity, a British Actors' Union, protested the policies of apartheid by refusing their members permission to perform in South Africa if multiracial audiences were prohibited from their respective performances. In February 1977 Equity extended the protest to include TV programmes.¹³ The protest lasted nearly twenty years, as the ban was lifted only in November 1993.¹⁴ Providing dubbed Afrikaans soundtracks to productions acquired from foreign countries continued (such as *Heidi*, *Girl of the Alps*, an animated series originally produced in Japan), as did co-productions with foreign TV producers (such as *Groot Veldslae van die Verlede*, a co-production with the French production company, Path  ). Meanwhile, local producers were involved to varying degrees in the creation of TV programmes, for example, 91 programmes in 1976 and 83 programmes in 1977.¹⁵ *Dubbele Alibi*, starring Nic de Jager and Sybil Coetzee, was the first Afrikaans drama to appear on SATV.¹⁶ Other examples of popular local TV series included *Ko-operasiestories* and *Nommer Asseblief*. *The Villagers* was the first locally produced soap opera. Local productions (the bulk of which were

⁹ The O'Malley Archives, "1963. Transkei Constitution Act No 48", Accessed: November 11, 2016: <https://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv01538/04lv01828/05lv01829/06lv01911.htm>.

¹⁰ Riaan Cruywagen, an individual synonymous with the SABC's Afrikaans News, starred as the voice actor for the character, Haas Das. Cruywagen presented his first news bulletin during the SABC's experimental TV broadcasts in November 1975.

¹¹ New-Zealand's rugby team is referred to as either the Kiwis or the All Blacks.

¹² SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1976, p. 93-94.

¹³ Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC* (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 106.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

¹⁵ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1976, p. 96. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1977, p. 56.

¹⁶ Michael Theunissen, Victor Nikitin & Melanie Pillay, *The Voice, The Vision: The Sixty Year History of the SABC* (Johannesburg: Advent Graphics, 1996), p. 105.

produced by the SABC's own facilities) accounted for 60% of SATV's programme material during the 1970s.¹⁷

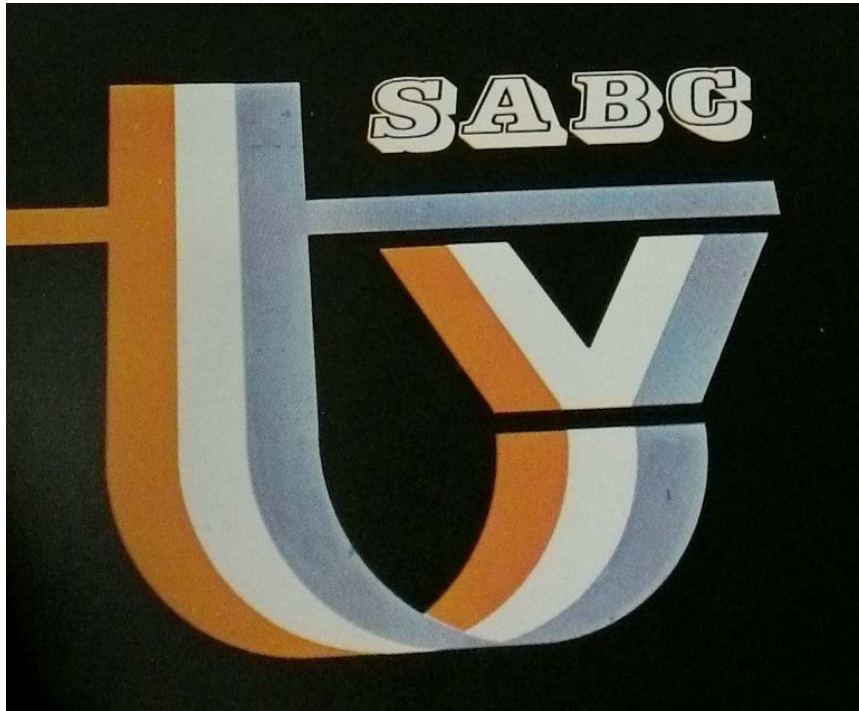


Illustration 12: SABC-TV's Logo.¹⁸

Technical and Financial Aspects

The construction of the SABC's television transmitter network and studio facilities at the Broadcasting Centre in Auckland Park were completed to a degree that allowed the introduction of SATV in January 1976. Thirteen high-power transmitters were erected in areas such as Hartbeesfontein, Glencoe, Oudtshoorn, Zeerust, Bethlehem, Kuruman and Piketberg in the same year, whilst modifications were made to the TV broadcasting centre in 1977 to accommodate the introduction of television commercials in 1978.¹⁹ By December 1978 the SABC's TV network had expanded to 40 TV stations, whilst 26 additional stations were commissioned for construction in 1979.²⁰ In 1979 the SABC started its preparation for the construction of a second Broadcasting Centre in Cape Town.²¹ The SABC's television transmitter network had expanded to such an extent that by 1981 91% of the white population,

¹⁷ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1977, p. 14.

¹⁸ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1975, p. 55.

¹⁹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1976, p. 97. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1977, p. 109.

²⁰ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1978, p. 18.

²¹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1979, p. 106.

83% of the Coloured population and 87% of the Asian population could receive TV broadcasts.²²

The popularity of SATV exceeded the SABC's expectations as 650 000 TV licences had been issued by December 1976,²³ whilst its audience averaged approximately 1,69 million viewers per evening.²⁴ Income generated by means of TV licence fees amounted to R30,13 million²⁵ and R35,2 million²⁶ in 1976 and 1977, respectively (an increase of 17%).²⁷ In 1977 the SABC focused its operations on the introduction of advertisements, which commenced on 2 January 1978. After the SABC consulted the interests of the advertising industry, commercial rates were determined at the beginning of 1977. Total TV income generated in 1978 amounted to approximately R80 million,²⁸ of which commercials accounted for R38,9 million or 49%.²⁹ The popularity of TV advertising amongst companies continuously increased and by 1979 advertisements became the SABC's largest source of revenue from both radio and television services. In 1980 R58,5 million³⁰ had been generated through TV advertisements (50% more than 1978).³¹ As a result, the timeframes allocated for advertisement as percentage of the total broadcasting time were increased by 0,75% (6,5% in total) as the number of applicants continuously grew.³² The following tables provide a percentage representation of SATV's programme schedule according to category; TV licences issued; and the annual income generated by SATV through TV licences and commercials; and the SABC's annual income from 1976 to 1980.

²² SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1981, p. 123.

²³ The Meyer Commission predicted that 700 000 TV sets would be sold within five years.

²⁴ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1976, p. 92.

²⁵ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R1,03 billion.

²⁶ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R1,2 billion.

²⁷ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1976, p. 18. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1977, p. 18.

²⁸ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R2,08 billion.

²⁹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1978, p. 17.

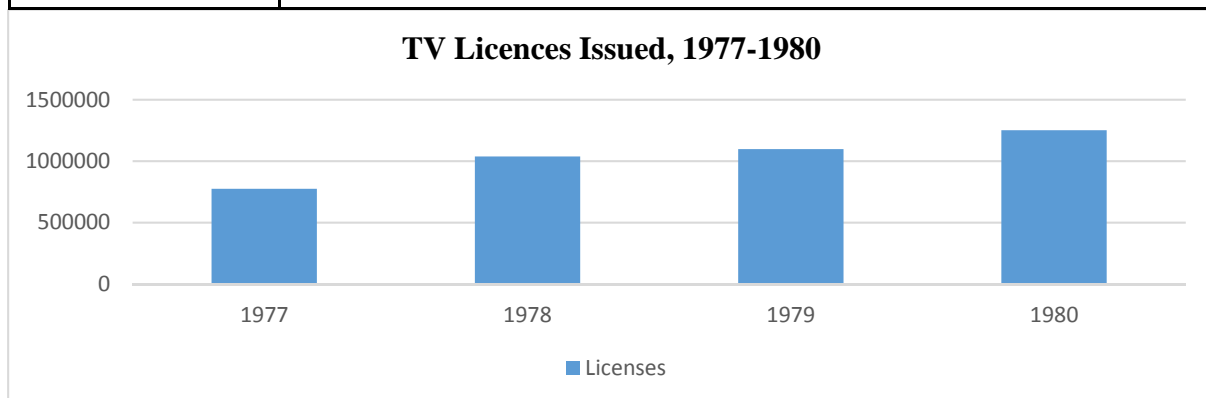
³⁰ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R1,24 billion.

³¹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1980, "Die Handels aspekte van Televisie".

³² *Ibid.*

Table 20:³³ Percentage Representation of Programme Types, 1976-1980 (excluding Advertisements)			
Category	1976	1978	1980
News, Journal and Magazine	25	20	19
Drama	21	24	33
Documentaries	11	15	11
Variety	11	12	8
Sport	14	14	11
Youth	7	7	10
Religious	6	4	5
"Serious" Music	5	4	3
Total	100	100	100

Table 21:³⁴ Television Licences Issued, 1977-1980	
Year	Licences (Million)
1977	0,774
1978	1,038
1979	1,098
1980	1,251



³³ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1976, p. 96; 1978, p. 58; 1980, "Persentasie Programinhoud – 1980".

³⁴ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1990, p. 10.

Table 22:³⁵ Television Income (Licences and Commercials), Total Income and Total Profit Generated by the SABC, 1976-1980				
Year	Income: Licences (R Million)	Income: Commercials (R Million)	The SABC's Total Income (R Million)	Total Profit (R Million)
1976	30,1	-	89,3	- 13,3
1978	41,0	38,9	133,7	21,3
1980	49,0	58,5	171,5	51,0

The conclusion that can be drawn from these tables, considering that the number of TV licences issued during the period 1976-1980 were almost double the expectations of the Meyer Commission and reached near saturation of the white market, is that the demand for television amongst South Africa's population was far greater than what the local cinematic film industry could have anticipated. A number of concurrent factors could explain this. First, SATV's transmitter network covered a vast geographical area, thus catering for its targeted consumers. Second, the delayed introduction of SATV only enhanced the novelty of the SABC's TV broadcasts. The press played a vital role in this regard; for example, *Volkshandel* in 1975 published the article "TV – the new status symbol", which argued that South Africa's patience will be rewarded by "[possibly] the best and most proven TV setup in the world", and it correctly predicted that, due to "the hunger for television", the "medium would quickly be admitted into South African homes."³⁶ Third, SATV's niche markets (phase one) had the financial means to obtain the television service during the 1970s. This is demonstrated by the fact that 71,8% of the adult white population, 44,6% of the Coloured population and 54,3% of the Asian population tuned into the Monday to Friday TV broadcasts by 1981.³⁷ The last and, perhaps, most significant factor concerns the content broadcast by SATV, i.e. its variety and (a theme reflected upon throughout this discussion) high quality of its content. Simply stated, increased variety and higher quality unquestionably increase entertainment value. When analysing SATV's percentage representation of programme types from 1976 to 1980, it becomes clear that the SABC endeavoured to offer a product which would cater to the widest range of interests possible. What also becomes evident is that more emphasis was placed on

³⁵ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1976, p. 18; 1978, p. 18, 20, 29; 1980, p. 20-21.

³⁶ *Volkshandel*, February 1975, "TV 75: 'n Spesiale Volkshandel-oorsig", p. 88.

³⁷ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1981, p. 122.

entertainment with SATV's development, considering that the representation of News, Journal and Magazine programmes dropped 6% within the space of five years as oppose to, for example, the 12% increase of Dramas. Unsurprisingly, the variety offered by SATV particularly threatened the future existence of the local drive-in and Afrikaans film production industry, as both industries targeted the South African household. When asked the reason why the drive-in industry failed in South Africa, Franz Marx responded:

“Well... Television! Drive-Ins, to a larger extent, were most suitable for a family culture. The father, mother, child in a car. In other words, it's family entertainment. That's what it [the drive-in cinema] was known for. Television offered the same... with the added benefit of not having to drive to a theatre, of course!”³⁸

Furthermore, Tables 18, 19 and 20 indicate that SATV's ability to maintain quality programming was created through a mutually reinforced economic cycle. The novelty, content and variety of TV programmes enhanced the demand for SATV, illustrated by the increase of TV licences. Consequently, more companies wished to advertise their products on the new audio-visual medium. As indicated, SATV commercials proved to be so popular that Springbok Radio was forced to dissolve in 1985, thereby demonstrating the significance of Satbel consolidating its screen advertising interests.³⁹ Income generated through TV advertisements provided the SABC with the financial means – considering that its total revenue and profits increased by 92% and by 483% in 1976 and 1980 respectively – to maintain these high standards, which further increased demand – thus ensuring the continuation of the cycle if managed correctly. It seems as though television advertising would play a paramount role, as was the case with foreign industries. This, of course, raised the questions of how the local cinematic film industry was affected and able to adapt to SATV's unanticipated desirability, as well as of the degree and nature of government support, seeing that the state was provided with a new and popular audio-visual mechanism to communicate its socio-cultural objectives.

Expansion of SABC-TV, 1981-1986

³⁸ Franz Marx, interview by Coenraad J. Coetzee, Stellenbosch University, April 15, 2015.

³⁹ Commercials were still broadcast on regional FM stations, such as Radio Highveld, Radio Good Hope and Radio Port Natal.

The SABC entered a new era in the 1980s. Dr P.J. Meyer's two-decade tenure as Chairman of the SABC ended on 31 March 1980.⁴⁰ He was replaced by Prof W.L. Mouton.⁴¹ In addition, two new television services, TV2 and TV3, were opened on 31 December 1981. TV2 transmitted in Nguni (Zulu and Xhosa) and TV3 in Sotho (South Sotho, Tswana and North Sotho). Initially, TV2 and TV3 shared one channel, which broadcast for 27 hours per week. However each service would receive its own channel in January 1983, with 31 hours of transmissions per week. SABC-TV's original channel was subsequently known as TV1. Commercials ran from the onset on the "Bantu" channels.⁴² The prospect of introducing a service which specifically catered to Black South Africans formed part of phase two and this was officially announced on 15 August 1979.⁴³ Programmes which, according to the SABC, "capture [Black] traditional habits and customs on film" were selected as broadcast material.⁴⁴ Several indigenous drama series were broadcast – *Shaka Zulu* (directed by William C. Faure and starring Henry Cele as the main actor)⁴⁵ being the most famous example, as it enjoyed both local and international acclaim. Two news bulletins, one in Sotho and the other in Nguni, were broadcast for 35 minutes per day. The timeframe was doubled when TV3 operated on a separate channel.⁴⁶ Examples of entertainment aimed at the youth included *Muwlana la Multa*, whilst programmes such as *Spiderman* and *Thunderbirds* were dubbed into African languages.⁴⁷ Further details on TV2/3 (statistics) will be provided when discussing their influence on the "Bantu cinematic film industry". Meanwhile, SABC-TV (later TV1) remained popular amongst South Africans as illustrated by the number of companies seeking to advertise their products on the service; 750 commercials were broadcast in 1981. However, the SABC soon discovered that the amended timeframe could not satisfy the demand for advertising time in South Africa and increased advertising slots were made available as illustrated in Table 23.

⁴⁰ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1980, p. 1.

⁴¹ Professor Wynand Mouton, who had served on the SABC Board since 1979, was a distinguished scientist and former principal of the University of the Orange Free State. *The Argus*, June 11, 1981, "Mouton and PM in talks of future status", p. 5.

⁴² The first commercial, for OK Bazaars, aired on 31 December 1981. The company paid R21 500 which was donated to charity.

⁴³ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1981, "TV1 en TV2 programme".

⁴⁴ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1978, p. 12.

⁴⁵ The series was based on the chief of the Zulu tribe, Shaka, who reigned from 1816 to 1828.

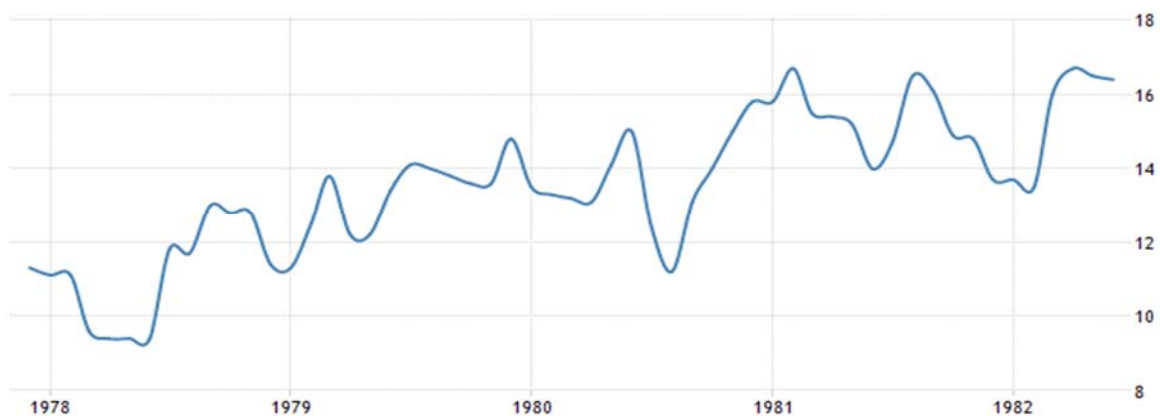
⁴⁶ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1982, "TV2 en 3 Nuus".

⁴⁷ Carin Bevan, *Putting Up Screens: A history of Television in South Africa, 1929-1976* (Unpublished MHCS, University of Pretoria, 2008), p. 170.

Table 23:⁴⁸ Total Broadcast Time devoted to Commercials on TV1, 1982-1984

Year	Percentage Representation (%)	Number of commercials	Income
1982	7	1005	R87,8 million
1983	8	1163	R122,5 million
1984	8	N/A	R149,7 million

TV1's transmission hours were extended in April 1984 (by one and a half hours per day). The audience for TV1 did increase after 1981, but not at the same rate witnessed from 1976 to 1978 seeing that the white market was already near saturation point, whilst living costs became increasingly expensive. For example, 76% (or 2,656 million) white South African adults tuned into the weekly TV1 broadcasts in 1985 – 481 000 more than in 1980.⁴⁹ Income generated through advertisements remained paramount as the SABC faced serious financial challenges during the 1980s, similar to those experienced throughout South Africa's general economy. The recession of the early 1980s and international economic sanctions imposed in protest against apartheid, for example, resulted in the rand losing its value, the gold price dropped and inflation increased as illustrated by the following graph:

Illustration 13: South African Inflation, 12 December 1977- 30 June 1982 (%)⁵⁰

⁴⁸ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1982; 1983; 1984, "TV1".

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, "Finansies".

⁵⁰ Trading Economics, "Statistics South Africa: South African Inflation Rate", Accessed: December 3, 2016: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/inflation-cpi>.

General production costs and the cost of the establishment and expansion of TV2/3 (and later TV4) increased. Consequently, the SABC's annual reports indicated either an operating deficit (twice) or a small margin of profit in the period 1981-1984.⁵¹ Despite the difficult economic conditions in which the SABC operated, standards maintained in programmes never declined, as suggested in the 1982 annual report: "During the year surveyed TV1 made a special endeavour to extend the scope and raise the quality of indigenous programmes."⁵² Production expenditure, for example, grew by 34% from 1982 to 1983.⁵³ However, increased production by the SABC itself consequently led to a reduction in funds made available for programmes produced by the private sector. Popular productions (Drama series and TV movies) made within this timeframe included *Vyfster*, *Westgate II*, *Brood vir my Broer*, *The Settlers* and *Die Perdesmous*.

On 30 March 1985 the SABC introduced a new TV service called TV4. The objective was to provide additional viewing material "with the emphasis falling on entertainment."⁵⁴ Broadcasts, starting at 21:00 CAT, were relayed on TV2/3's transmitters after services closed down. Examples of popular programmes include *Dynasty*, *M*A*S*H* and – significantly – live sport transmissions. An average of 1,7 million adults tuned into weekly broadcasts made within the first year, which the corporation deemed as successful.⁵⁵ Additional entertainment introduced by TV4 was a cause for concern in the Afrikaans cinematic industry as emphasised by the South African press. *Die Vaderland*, for example, estimated that TV viewership amongst the white population would increase to 80%, that could possibly lead to a further decline in cinema attendance.⁵⁶ Despite the expansion of the TV service, the SABC's financial difficulties intensified in and after 1985 – when P.W. Botha made his infamous Rubicon speech. The SABC operated at a loss of R27,1 million⁵⁷ in 1985 and R27,9 million⁵⁸ in 1986.⁵⁹ South Africa's unstable political and economic conditions (which contributed to low consumer spending and confidence) were held most responsible for this. The country's inflation rate

⁵¹ 8,9% profit in 1983 was the largest. SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1981; 1982; 1983; 1984, "Financial Results".

⁵² SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1982, "TV1 programmes".

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁵⁴ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1985, p. 7.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

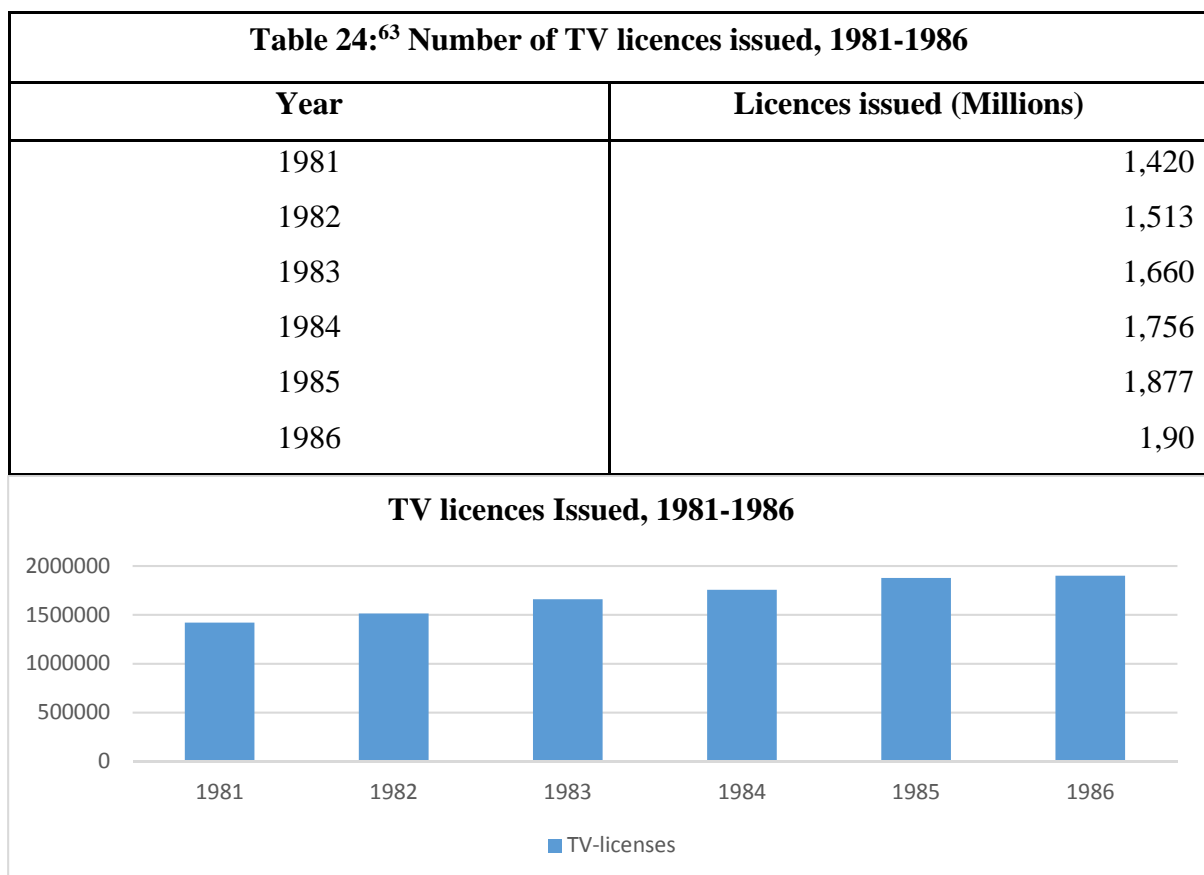
⁵⁶ *Die Vaderland*, March 28, 1985, "TV4 het ook sy nadele", p. 13.

⁵⁷ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R315 million.

⁵⁸ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R271 million.

⁵⁹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1985; 1986, "Finance".

reached its peak of 20,9% in January 1986.⁶⁰ The number of annual licences did not decline and fees were raised by 30% in 1986. However, the fees had remained unchanged from 1976 to 1985, despite the dramatic increase in inflation. As a result, the consumer – in real terms – had been paying 60% less for the service. In addition, the adverse economic climate had detrimental effects on advertising, which accounted for approximately two-thirds of the SABC's total income.⁶¹ For example, in 1986 South Africa's total expenditure on all media advertising increased by only 7% (i.e. a real decrease of approximately 30%). In September 1986 (M-Net was officially launched on 1 October 1986), TV1's and TV4's audiences stood at 4,072 million and 1,393 million, respectively.⁶² Table 24 indicates the number of TV licences issued annually from 1981 to (September) 1986 to illustrate its popularity amongst South African viewers:



⁶⁰ Trading Economics, "Statistics South Africa: South African Inflation Rate", Accessed: December 3, 2016: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/inflation-cpi>.

⁶¹ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1986, "Finance".

⁶² This includes Whites, Coloureds and Asians. *Die Vaderland*, March 26, 1986, "M-Net sal pure plesier bied", p. 2.

⁶³ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1986, p. 19.

The Immediate Damage Inflicted on the Cinematic Film Industry by SATV, 1976-1977

According to a study conducted by the VVRSA, in the early 1970s white South Africans were some of the most avid cinema goers in the world – averaging 26 cinema visits per individual each year.⁶⁴ The introduction of SATV, within its first year and without advertisements, led to an immediate and substantial decline in cinema attendance in South Africa. On 30 April 1975 the Board of Trade and Industry launched an investigation with the aim of determining the severity of the reduction by comparing statistics of 20 drive-in theatres and 33 (“four wall”/indoor) cinemas in 1975 and 1976.⁶⁵ On average, 80% of an Afrikaans films’ revenues were accumulated through drive-ins.⁶⁶ Drive-in attendance decreased by 40,1% as opposed to the 22,6% decrease for indoor cinemas for South African productions.⁶⁷ Consequently, the number of English and Afrikaans films produced dropped from 26 in 1975/76 to 15 in 1976/77.⁶⁸ Notable works produced by Afrikaans companies in 1976 include: *Vergeet My Nie* (Elmo De Witt Films), *Ridder van die Grootpad* (CARFO), *Karate Olympia* (Kavalier Films), *Daar kom tant Alie* (Tommie Myer Films), *Liefste Madelein* (Brigadiers Filmproduksies) and *Funny People* (Mimosa Films). In the United States increased competition from television led to the rehabilitation of cinemas/drive-ins. The number of feature films produced in the USA decreased, but the average quality of each production increased considerably. In addition, feature films were produced which incorporated more scenes of a sexual and/or violent nature – content that could not be broadcast on American television as a result of its far stricter regulations. Cinema attendance consequently recovered to the same levels seen in 1948, as illustrated in Table 25.

⁶⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report of the Department of Trade and Industry: “Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika (Verslag No. 1753)”, 21 December 1976, p. 9.

⁶⁵ December 1976 was excluded as the report was finished in that month.

⁶⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1A, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 3, T.W.S. Meyer’s response to the subsidy amendments (Correspondence): “Kommentaar op verslag nr. 1753 (21 Des. 1976) van die Raad van Handel en Nywerheid”, 1977, p. 2.

⁶⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report of the Department of Trade and Industry: “Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika (Verslag No. 1753)”, 21 December 1976, p. 1, 5 and 9.

⁶⁸ The state’s fiscal years as indicated in the previous chapters. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 7, Addendum: N101/3/1 Volume 3, Circular: “Rolprente Vrygestel”, 1983, (n.p.).

Table 25:⁶⁹ USA's Cinema Attendance represented as Percentages, 1948-1975

Year	Attendance Index (%)
1948	100
1958	42
1968	29
1975	100

Censorship regulations in South Africa meant that Afrikaans cinematic film producers could not rely, unlike their foreign counterparts, on sex and/or violence (or any factors which enhanced “shock value”) to attract more consumers – restrictions which the Department of Trade and Industry also felt necessary. The government, therefore, argued that the only way South African cinematic film production could be sustained was to amend the subsidy system so as to increase the quality of local productions. The amendment was also made in the light of other factors that only enhanced the impact of television. First, multiracial audiences were prohibited in South African cinemas, despite frequent requests from the country’s major distributors from 1975 to 1985 to allow exemption.⁷⁰ Second, films could be shown on only six days of the week (reinforced by the Prohibition of the Exhibition of Films on Sundays and Public Holidays Act of 1977, which stipulated that “no person shall exhibit any film on any Sunday in or at any place to which admission is obtained” unless consented thereto [by the government]).⁷¹ Third, as indicated, adverse economic conditions led to an increase in production costs. Lastly, the SABC’s demand for local productions still did not provide sufficient opportunities for South African cinematic filmmakers, as the SABC utilised its own production facilities for most of the TV content, whilst government research indicated that

⁶⁹ Note that 1948 (i.e. the 100%) is the baseline of the table and that the subsequent years are represented as percentages in relation to the 1948 figures. The figures, therefore, do not represent the percentage of Americans who attended cinema exhibitions in the respective years. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report of the Department of Trade and Industry: “Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika (Verslag No. 1753)”, 21 December 1976, p. 9.

⁷⁰ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 64.

⁷¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, *South African Film Weekly* Article: “Industry loses millions while fast asleep”, June 1976, p. 2. South Africa, Department of the Prime Minister, 1977, Prohibition of the Exhibition of Films on Sundays and Public Holidays, 1977 (Act No. 16 of 1977), To prohibit the exhibition of films on Sundays and certain public holidays in certain circumstances and to provide for matters connected therewith, *Government Gazette* No. 141: 5448 16 March, p. 2.

filmmakers felt that the compensation – which averaged between R280 and R300 per minute – was “completely inadequate”. Filmmakers claimed that the cost of a TV production averaged R333 per minute. The SABC responded by stating that most of its TV content consisted either of live broadcasts or programmes created before the introduction of SATV, and the TV schedule allowed only two hours per day during which to broadcast TV movies, short films and documentaries. The production facilities erected, according to the broadcaster, did not duplicate any existing production facilities. The conventional methods of cinematic film production were deemed, for technical reasons, to be unfit for the demands of modern television. In addition, the SABC maintained the compensation paid was reasonable as salaries were based “on strict scientific calculations”.⁷² The SABC’s monopoly of SATV allowed the broadcaster to dictate the times allocated for local productions and the amount of compensation paid to producers. The challenges faced by cinematic film producers would continue until the introduction of M-Net.

The continuation of the subsidy scheme was justified by the government’s investigation:

“Despite the existence of television, the demand for film to satisfy certain cultural needs will always remain... the demand will completely be satisfied by foreign products, if allowed”.⁷³

The Board of Trade and Industry based the amendments of the subsidy scheme on eleven successful films (GBO of approximately R300 000 or more) produced in 1974 and 1975 as it was perceived that only motion pictures of a high quality could compete with television. Figures were adjusted to indicate these films’ revenues, received subsidies (based on the scheme at the time), production expenditures and profits, if cinema attendance (drive-ins and indoor) declined by 30%. The calculations are demonstrated in Table 26.

⁷² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report of the Department of Trade and Industry: “Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika (Verslag No. 1753)”, 21 December 1976, p. 32-33.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Table 26:⁷⁴ Combined Decrease of GBO, Subsidy, Production Expenditure and Profit of 11 Feature Films, if Cinema Attendance dropped by 30%

	Actual Figures (Rand)	Hypothetical Figures (Rand)
GBO	3 906 661	2 733 962
Subsidy	1 847 761	1 201 179
Production Cost	1 520 241	2 030 514
Profit	1 787 909	-27 379

Subsidy for Afrikaans and English films was consequently increased from 55 to 65% and 44 to 52%, respectively. In this regard, the combined profits of the eleven films (after a 30% reduction) would increase to R190 329.⁷⁵ Although 90% less than the actual figure, government felt that the subsidy scheme was designed to assist producers in recovering costs rather than to provide extraordinary profits. The Board recommended that the maximum payable subsidy should be based on a percentage (70%) of a film's production cost so as to encourage large-scale productions, whilst simultaneously limiting government spending. However, the subsidy threshold remained at R50 000 (NBO) despite a rise in inflation.⁷⁶ The government, however, argued that television (i.e. additional audio-visual competition) automatically eliminated productions of an inferior quality.⁷⁷

The Board of Trade and Industry's recommendations were strongly opposed by the VVRSA. The VVRSA maintained that the method of using only 11 successful feature films as samples created a false impression of the conditions in the industry and that the Board failed to use cumulative figures in arriving at its statistical conclusions. After T.W.S. Meyer consulted Herman Visser (Distribution Manager at Ster-Kinekor), the Association argued that cinema

⁷⁴ Note that the hypothetical production costs were adjusted to account for the increase in the Consumer Price Index. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report of the Department of Trade and Industry: "Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika (Verslag No. 1753)", 21 December 1976, p. 15.

⁷⁵ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R6,5 million.

⁷⁶ R50 000 in 1964: Value in 2016 taking into account inflation = approximately R3,9 million. R50 000 in 1976: Value in 2016 taking into account inflation = approximately R1,7 million.

⁷⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report of the Department of Trade and Industry: "Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika (Verslag No. 1753)", 21 December 1976, p. 23.

attendance had dropped 50% by April 1977 – 20% more than what was considered as the basis for the subsidy amendments. *Kavalier Films* calculated that the subsidy rate had to be increased to 172%, if incomes were to match those generated during the pre-television era. However, realising this to be unrealistic, the VVRSA requested that the rate had to increase to 80% for Afrikaans films and 70% for English films, if they generated income between R95 000 and R450 000. To discourage exploitation, the association suggested that the subsidy threshold should be increased to R90 000 or R100 000.⁷⁸

The Department of Trade and Industry itself disputed the conclusions drawn by the Board. The average GBO received by the eleven films was R355 000, whilst the Department regarded films which received R200 000 GBO as successful. It was also suggested that only three of the eleven films would have made a profit with the amended scheme after television. Similar to the argument made by the VVRSA, the Department argued that the eleven films misrepresented the industry, whilst claiming the 50% decline in cinema attendance as maintained by the VVRSA to be more realistic.⁷⁹ After numerous meetings, correspondence with the VVRSA and a consultation with Jamie Uys and Boet Troskie (Mimosa Films), amendments to the subsidy scheme were finalised. Subsidy pay-outs were still based on NBO; however, a sliding scale was introduced to limit government expenditure to R300 000⁸⁰ per production, which applied from September 1977 (Table 27).

⁷⁸ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: between R3 million and R3,3 million. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1A, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 3, Correspondence of the VVRSA: “Kommentaar oor verslag nr. 1753 (21. 12. 1976) van die Raad van Handel en Nywerheid en Wysigings. Voorgestel deur die Vereniging van Vollengte Rolprentvervaardigers”, 13 May 1977, p. 3.

⁷⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1A, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 3, Department of Trade and Industry comments regarding the Board’s Report (1753): “Ondersoek na die Rolprentbedryf: RHN verslag nr. 1753”, 3 August 1977, p. 2.

⁸⁰ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R9,8 million.

Table 27:⁸¹ Subsidy Scheme which Applied from September 1977		
Afrikaans Feature Films		
NBO (Rand)	Tariff	Subsidy (Rand)
< 200 001	70%	140 000
200 000 to 300 000	60%	60 000
300 001 to 400 000	50%	50 000
400 001 to 500 000	40%	40 000
500 001 to 533 333	30%	10 000
Maximum Payable		300 000
English Feature Films		
NBO (Rand)	Tariff	Subsidy (Rand)
< 200 001	60%	120 000
200 000 to 300 000	50%	50 000
300 001 to 400 000	40%	40 000
400 001 to 500 000	30%	30 000
500 001 to 800 000	20%	60 000
Maximum Payable		300 000

The subsidy scheme's formula was based on 22 Afrikaans films released between March 1973 and December 1974. The NBO of these films ranged from R157 000 to R460 000, whilst eight films produced within this timeframe were not considered as their revenues were too low. Government maintained that too few English films were produced to base calculations upon.⁸² The subsidy threshold was raised to R100 000. English films received a smaller subsidy pay-out up until an NBO of R500 000 was generated from a larger market. It was government's perception that a R60 000 pay-out after more than R500 000 was earned in NBO would enhance the quality of these productions.⁸³ Seventeen Afrikaans and English feature films were

⁸¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1A, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 3, Minutes (Department of Trade and Industry): "Gewysigde subsidie-skema vir plaaslik vervaardigde rolprente", 26 October 1977, p. 1.

⁸² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 1A, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 3, Department of Trade and Industry comments regarding the Board's Report (1753): "Ondersoek na die Rolprentbedryf: RHN verslag nr. 1753", 3 August 1977, p. 3 and 7.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

released in 1977, including *Netnou hoor die Kinders* (*Brigadiers Filmproduksies*), *Winners II* (Elmo de Witt Films), *Golden Rendezvous* (Film Trust) and *Crazy People* (*Kavalier Films*).⁸⁴

The Merger of Ster Films and Kinekor due to a drop in Cinema Attendance

By June 1976 Satbel, CIC-Warner (Pty) Ltd (CIC-Warner) and United Artists Corporation SA (Pty) Ltd (United Artists) exercised dominance over the South African distribution network. Cinintercorp, an associate company of CIC-Warner, acquired Film Trust's shares in Cintrust. Apart from the larger distributors, a number of smaller companies established a local circuit, including Hollywood Film Distributors (Pty) Ltd, Walt Disney Productions, Focus Films (Pty) Ltd, Romay Film Productions (Pty) Ltd and Mimosa Film Productions (Pty) Ltd. Ster, Kinekor and CIC-Warner had the largest shares in the exhibition industry. Satbel distributed 98% of local productions, 79% of imported films and 82% of all films exhibited in South Africa. CIC-Warner distributed only 2% of locally produced films, whilst circulating 12% of foreign films imported. United Artists would only distribute 6% of foreign produced films. The combined South African interests of CIC-Warner and United Artists amounted to 16% of the total market share. In 1975-76, the total box office revenue generated by 530 South African theatres was approximately R53 million.⁸⁵

Table 28:⁸⁶ Costs of Films Hired for Distribution in South Africa, 1 July 1975- 30 June 1976			
Company	South African Films	Imported Films	Total
	R' 000	R' 000	R' 000
Satbel	3,849	13,572	17,421
CIC-Warner	62	2,140	2,202
United Artists	-	1,440	1,440
Total	R 3,911	R 17,152	R 21,063

⁸⁴ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 266-267.

⁸⁵ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R2,25 billion. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 3, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 7, Memorandum attached to correspondence sent to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism: "Ondersoek na die Suid-Afrikaanse rolprentverspreidings en vertoningsbedryf", 7 April 1981, p. 6-7.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

On 15 October 1975 the Minister of Economic Affairs launched an investigation to evaluate the effects of SATV on South Africa's distribution and exhibition industry. Forty percent of all South African cinemas were researched. The average weekly indoor cinema attendance, taking into account screenings of both foreign and local cinematic productions, dropped from 251 154 persons in 1975 to 180 153 persons in 1976, whilst the average weekly GBO dropped from R303 398 to R217 625. Average weekly attendance of drive-ins dropped from 216 134 in 1975 to 120 386 in 1976. The average weekly GBO decreased from R145 000 to R84 108.⁸⁷ William Pretorius, who was a proprietor of the independent Marwil Drive-In in Newcastle (KwaZulu-Natal) and had contracts with both Ster and Kinekor, described his own situation by stating: "Prior to TV we used to average R1 000 per week for [a] film rental... Now we're crawling between R200 and R400 per week."⁸⁸ As a result, many exhibitors doubled the number of features played in a year to include more variety than offered by TV, further reducing the screen time and income of local producers.⁸⁹

Phase four of Satbel's rationalisation of its cinema interests commenced after 1975. Ster Films and Kinekor's average weekly (drive-ins and indoor) cinema attendance decreased from 467 288 for the period January 1975 to December 1975 to 300 479 for January 1976 to December 1976 – or by 36%.⁹⁰ By 1977 Ster Films and Kinekor's cinema circuit had been reduced and modernised to counter the effects of SATV, comprising of 102 indoor cinemas, 45 drive-ins and even two ice rinks in multiplex buildings.⁹¹ Cinemas were integrated into large-scale leisure and retail developments, as is common practice today, as seen in the Tygervalley Mall (Durbanville), the Eikestad Mall (Stellenbosch), Brooklyn Mall (Pretoria), Carnival City Casino and Entertainment World (Brakpan) and the V&A Waterfront (Cape Town) to name a few.⁹² In March 1977 Satbel announced the amalgamation of Ster and Kinekor to establish a new organisation, Ster-Kinekor (Pty) Ltd (Ster-Kinekor). The government permitted the merger because of the substantial decline in cinema attendance and,

⁸⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 3, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 7, Memorandum attached to correspondence sent to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism: "Ondersoek na die Suid-Afrikaanse rolprentverspreidings en vertoningsbedryf", 7 April 1981, p. 18.

⁸⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, *SA Film Weekly* Article: "Weekly Forum", 10 June 1977, p. 2.

⁸⁹ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 4. (1/35) Chairman Report: "Voorsitterverslag vir die jaar geëindig", 26 November 1976, p. 1.

⁹⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 3, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 8, Correspondence from Ster-Kinekor: "Rolprentsubsidieskema", 14 October 1983, p. 2.

⁹¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, *SA Film Weekly* Article: "Ster and Kinekor Merger", 4 March 1977, p. 1.

⁹² All of them have Ster-Kinekor cinemas operating within them.

consequently, losses in film rentals. Operating as one organisation in challenging economic conditions had multiple benefits, including increased administrative efficiency, operational savings, a feature no longer had to be exchanged between two groups, which led to a better utilised product and a better balanced and complete network of cinemas. Herman Visser acted as Executive of Distribution, Phillip MacDonald as Executive of Ster-Kinekor's exhibiting network, whilst Charl de Kock managed Ster-Kinekor's finances.⁹³

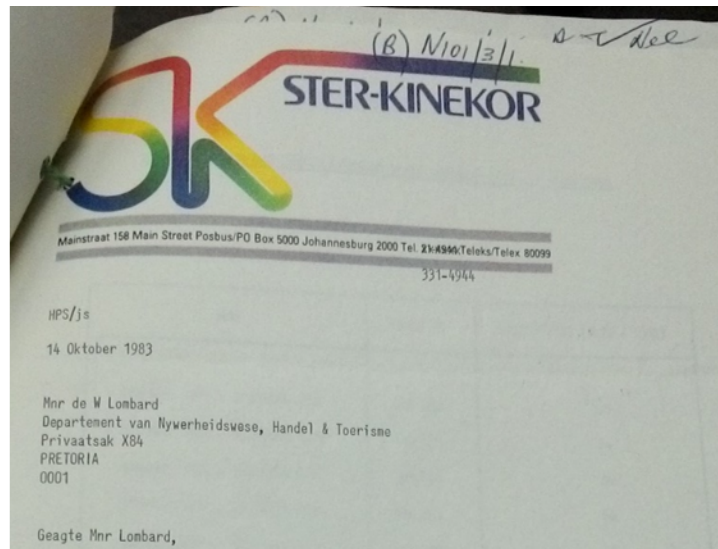


Illustration 14: From correspondence sent in 1983 from Ster-Kinekor (the company's logo after the merger) to the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, with statistics to indicate Ster-Kinekor's weekly cinema attendance attached.⁹⁴

Adapting, trying, dying, 1978-1986

1978 commenced with a sense of idealism throughout the industry. In addition to the amended subsidy system, box office returns for December/January 1977/78 suggested that the South African cinematic producing industry might have been able to recover. Jeremy Birkett (a Director of Satbel) revealed that cinema attendance in December 1977 was 52% higher than in December 1976.⁹⁵ The positive outlook prompted Satbel's aim to inject R7 million⁹⁶ capital into the production industry within a space of three years. However, optimism was soon replaced with realism as, for example, Satbel's own *Witblitz and Peach Brandy* (1978)

⁹³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, *SA Film Weekly* Article: "Ster and Kinekor Merger", 4 March 1977, p. 1.

⁹⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 3, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 8, Correspondence from Ster-Kinekor: "(Geagte Mnr Lombard...) Rolprentsubsidieskema", 14 October 1983, p. 1.

⁹⁵ *Die Suid-Wester*, January 31, 1978, "Groot inspuiting vir filmbedryf", p. 2.

⁹⁶ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R221 million.

ultimately failed at the box office.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the industry was increasingly subjected to criticism in newspaper reports, and from members of the public as well as figures within the production industry, as mentioned in an article from South African Airways' *Flying Springbok/Vlieënde Springbok*:

"It is said too that after 50 years of film-making, South Africa is still churning out (with rare exceptions)⁹⁸ an endless stream of painfully mushy melodramas and inane comedies."⁹⁹

The Star's analysis of *Diamante en die Dief* (1978), a film that received better reviews from the press, further emphasised this point in its headline alone: "Local film not torture to watch."¹⁰⁰ Twenty-one feature films received subsidies within two years of the scheme's amendment, whilst eight films could not qualify – for example, *Kavalier Films' Billy Boy* (1978), J.J.M. van Zyl's *Decision to Die* (1978) and Lindie Films' *Charlie word 'n Ster* (1979). Out of the 21 films which did qualify for subsidy, only 11 (which included Winter Films' *'n Seder Val in Waterkloof* [1978] and *Brigadiers Films' Kootjie Emmer* [1978]) were profitable.¹⁰¹ This means that approximately 62% could be deemed box office failures.

The average weekly cinema attendance for indoor theatres and drive-ins declined from approximately 14% to 5% between 1977 and 1979.¹⁰² To counter the drop in cinema attendance, South African exhibitors frequently increased admission fees. According to the Department of Statistics, the average admission fees for indoor cinemas and drive-ins were increased from R1,20 and R0,67 in 1976 to R2,60 and R0,94 in 1979 (Table 29).

⁹⁷ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 43.

⁹⁸ Some examples will be reflected upon in the section "The Diamonds in the Rough".

⁹⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, *Flying Springbok/Vlieënde Springbok* article: "Close up on the South African Film industry", 11 January 1978, p. 11.

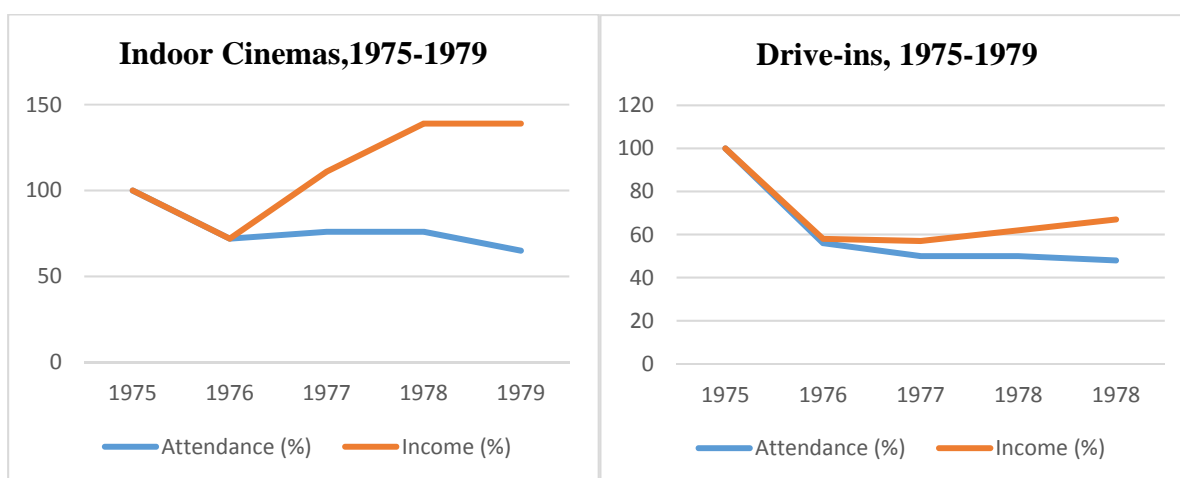
¹⁰⁰ Leon van Nierop, *Daar Doer in die Fliek: 'n Persoonlike Blik op die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Rolprent*, (Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2016), p. 219.

¹⁰¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 2, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 6, Memorandum: "'n Oorsig van die doelmagtigheid van die gewysigde skema sedert 1 September 1977", 17 April 1980, p. 4, Appendix A and Appendix B.

¹⁰² Research conducted by government that investigated 40% of all South African exhibitors. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 3, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 7, Attached memorandum to a correspondence send the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism: "Ondersoek na die Suid-Afrikaanse rolprentverspreidings en vertoningsbedryf", 7 April 1981, p. 18.

Table 29:¹⁰³ Figures (Represented by Percentages) of Weekly Average Attendance and GBO, 1975-1979

Indoor Cinemas		
Year	Attendance (%)	Income (%)
1975	100	100
1976	72	72
1977	76	111
1978	76	139
1979	65	139
Drive-ins		
1975	100	100
1976	56	58
1977	50	57
1978	50	62
1979	48	67



The dramatic increase in admission fees, 117% total in the case of indoor cinemas, was adopted from a strategy utilised in countries abroad. This increase led to an enquiry from government

¹⁰³ Note that 1975 (i.e. the 100%) is the baseline for the table and that the subsequent years are represented as percentages in relation to the 1975 figures. The figures, therefore, do not represent the percentage of South Africans who attended cinemas in the respective years. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 3, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 7, Attached memorandum to a correspondence send the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism: "Ondersoek na die Suid-Afrikaanse rolprentverspreidings en vertoningsbedryf", 7 April 1981, p. 18.

as the average increase of 21% per year was 7,6% higher than the average increase in general consumer prices at the time. Local exhibitors, however, defended their actions by simply stating that admission fees in other countries were still more expensive. A question which immediately rises when studying the table is why drive-ins did not raise their prices at the same rate as indoor cinemas. The rate in which drive-in attendance declined (52% in the period 1975-1979) forestalled such action as the exhibitors could not risk a steep increase in entrance fees for a commodity and activity families already had available and enjoyed in their own homes.

The National Film Board: A Struggle between the Private and Public Sector

The National Film Board (NFB) is utilised as a case study to indicate the degree of financial distress experienced by the Afrikaans production industry after local TV-services commenced. The private sector endeavoured to eliminate what was deemed unfair competition from a state-controlled film producer (NFB) within an environment that became increasingly difficult. The creation of the National Film Board originated from government's demand to produce public information films during and after the 1940s. The demand, according to government, could not be satisfied by the private sector at the time as South Africa "lacked the necessary production facilities."¹⁰⁴ Consequently, film production units were established within the then Department of Education, Art and Science, and later the Department of Defence and the State Information Office. In 1949 John Grierson – who had been involved in the establishment of the Canadian National Film Board – suggested that a similar board be introduced in South Africa. An official investigation followed, but it was only in September 1955 that the De Villiers Committee researched the distribution and production of films designed for various state departments and/or state supporting organisations.¹⁰⁵ The findings of the De Villiers Committee corresponded to some extent with those previously made by Grierson, subsequently leading to the founding of the National Film Board on 1 April 1964.

Article 9 of the National Film Board Act (Act 73 of 1963) summarised the paramount objectives of the public body, i.e. the coordination of state films, the production and distribution of films designed to educate the South African public according to the needs of government, and the acquisition,¹⁰⁶ storage and preservation of films which were deemed to have archival

¹⁰⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 185, Addendum: N101/3/5, Volume 13, Report of the Department of National Education: "Verslag van die Komitee van Ondersoek na die Nasionale Filmraad", 11 August 1978, p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁶ Reminiscent of the policies drafted by the SABC and therefore will not be discussed in detail.

value. Examples of NFB productions included recruitment films designed for the South African Police, soil conservation, combating diseases, etc. Significantly, the NFB also aspired to promote the expansion of the South African film industry by providing practical experience to individuals producing films (its personnel increased from 112 employees in April 1964 to 393 employees in Mei 1977), whilst also allowing the private sector to use its film studio for cinematic film production.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, during the promulgation of the Act, government suggested that 60% of the films required by state should be channelled to the private sector.¹⁰⁸

The NFB initially utilised the production facilities of the film service provided by the Department of Education. Construction of a new studio complex in Weavind Park (Pretoria) got underway as the demand for productions increased. However, before its completion the government announced the introduction of South Africa's TV service. The new studio and its facilities were subsequently adapted to accommodate the production of films for television. The cost of the new complex ultimately amounted to R3,2 million,¹⁰⁹ whilst a further R2,7 million¹¹⁰ was allocated to production equipment. The NFB accumulated the bulk of its funds from the State (either through loans or services) and later the SABC. Prior to the announcement of SATV, the NFB operated with profits continuously increasing from R119 000 in 1968/69, for example, to R128 000 in 1970/1971. However, profits decreased to R96 000 the following year with the NFB subsequently operating at a loss after 1972/73 (R61 000) which amounted to R931 000¹¹¹ in 1977/78. This financial position could be attributed to a lack of planning, coordination and regulation of expenses. For example, production costs increased dramatically in the 1970s as a result of higher salaries and wages paid after 1973 (increased 209% from 1972/73 to 1977/78) and the operating costs created by the NFB's new studio complex and facilities. However, whilst expenditure increased, income decreased. For instance, production in 1977/78 yielded R330 000¹¹² – in other words R423 000 less than in 1970/71.¹¹³ The decrease

¹⁰⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 185, Addendum: N101/3/5, Volume 13, Report of the Department of National Education: "Verslag van die Komitee van Ondersoek na die Nasionale Filmraad", 11 August 1978, p. 11. *National Film Board Act*, Statutes of the Republic of South Africa (1963), p. 862.

¹⁰⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 185, Addendum: N101/3/5, Volume 13, Report of the Department of National Education: "Verslag van die Komitee van Ondersoek na die Nasionale Filmraad", 11 August 1978, p. 15.

¹⁰⁹ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R120 million.

¹¹⁰ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R100 million.

¹¹¹ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R29, 4 million.

¹¹² Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R13,4 million.

¹¹³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 185, Addendum: N101/3/5, Volume 13, Report of the Department of National Education: "Verslag van die Komitee van Ondersoek na die Nasionale Filmraad", 11 August 1978, p. 10-12 and "Bylae E".

in profit was yet again the result of television as SABC-TV offered state departments an additional audio-visual medium to promote their interests.

Whilst the NFB was facing serious financial problems, pressure on it from the private sector simultaneously intensified. The initial call by government to allow the private sector to produce 60% of its films never materialised. Only 33% of the NFB's output was channelled to the private sector from 1964 to 1977, since the number of films required by government was less than expected, coupled with the fact that the NFB was financially unstable – thus forcing the NFB to produce as many films as possible itself.¹¹⁴ Desperate for additional income, the NFB also sought to produce programmes for SABC-TV as the “television service offered one of the biggest opportunities for the Board to fully utilise its facilities.”¹¹⁵ An example of an NFB production is the series *Historiese Suid-Afrika/Historic South Africa*, which consisted of 12 half-hour documentaries (six in Afrikaans and six in English) for which the SABC paid R8 000 per film, or R96 000 in total.¹¹⁶ However, the lack of work channelled to the private sector and the NFB's attempt to produce films for the SABC – a field that many Afrikaans producers could not exploit – caused friction between the NFB and the private sector.

On 28 March 1977 the Minister of National Education – P.G.F. Koornhof – instructed his department to investigate the NFB's business operations, financial viability, modes of financing and future survival. The report, spearheaded by N.H. Botma (Chief Accountant of the Treasury), was completed on 11 August 1978.¹¹⁷ The investigation, which consulted production and distribution bodies such as *Brigadiers Films*, *Elmo de Witt Films*, *Kavalier Films* and *Satbel*, to name a few, concluded that the private sector regarded the NFB as “just another production house” which created unfair competition.¹¹⁸ There were three main reasons for this view. The NFB was exempt from customs and import tariffs, and from sales and income tax, hence being directly supported by the government and having the privileged position of

¹¹⁴ When the NFB was created, government projected that 200 films would be needed annually. In reality, however, the most required were 104 films in 1964/65. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 183, Addendum: N101/3/5, Volume 10, Correspondence between the NFR and the Secretary of National Education: “Deurstuur van werk na die privaatsektor”. (n.d.), p. 2.

¹¹⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 183, Addendum: N101/3/5, Volume 10, Board Meeting: “Twaalfde Jaarverslag vir die Tydperk 1 April 1975 tot 31 Maart 1976”, 23 November 1976, p. 6.

¹¹⁶ SAB, Nasionale Filmraad (NFR), 353, Addendum: 37/2, Volume 1, Contract between the NFB and the SABC: “Ooreenkoms aangegaan tussen die Suid-Afrikaanse Uitsaaikorporasie en die Nasionale Filmraad: *Historiese Suid-Afrika*”, October 1974, p. 2.

¹¹⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 185, Addendum: N101/3/5, Volume 13, Report of the Department of National Education: “Verslag van die Komitee van Ondersoek na die Nasionale Filmraad”, 11 August 1978, p. i.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

choosing what films it wished to produce and which it would channel to the private sector. Furthermore, the private sector found no evidence of the NFB's policy of providing training to aspiring filmmakers. The private sector representatives claimed that their respective companies provided the necessary practical experience, as did the Pretoria Technical College which at the time was the only institution that provided a formal, technical course for students aspiring to be involved in the cinematic film industry. It seems in retrospect that the statement is rather contradictory to previous claims made by the Afrikaans production industry. As previously indicated, many filmmakers – when consulted on amendments to the subsidy scheme – suggested that a significant reason for the South African industry's failure to expand was the lack of experience. Their statement, therefore, indicates that the introduction of SATV had consequently shifted the focus of the production industry from developing South African filmmaking to one of survival.

The Committee for the Investigation of the National Film Board, which drafted the report, formulated 17 conclusions, which – for the sake of avoiding repetition – will be summarised here. The financial difficulties experienced by the NFB were a result of inadequate planning and management, and the NFB did in fact represent unfair competition with South Africa's film production industry.¹¹⁹ Upon investigating the report's findings, Cabinet determined that the activities of the NFB would gradually be phased out to allow a timeframe in which personnel could find employment elsewhere.¹²⁰ In 1979 film production was transferred to the private sector and the assets and, as such, the financial responsibilities of the NFB were taken over by the state. However, the archival service – which were fully subsidised by the state, initially known as the South African Film Institute and later changed to the National Film Archive (NFA) – continued its operations. In 1982 (with the NFB now defunct) the National Archives and Record Service incorporated the NFA, and its name was changed to the National Film, Video and Sound Archives (NFVSA) in 1985; it currently still operates under the jurisdiction of the Department of Arts and Culture.¹²¹

Utilisation of the “B-scheme”

¹¹⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 185, Addendum: N101/3/5, Volume 13, Report of the Department of National Education: “Verslag van die Komitee van Ondersoek na die Nasionale Filmraad”, 11 August 1978, p. 21-22.

¹²⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 185, Addendum: N101/3/5, Volume 13, Special meeting held by members of the Board (Minutes): “Notule van ‘n spesiale vergadering van die Raad gehou in die Raadsaal, Kamer A100, Filmraadgebou...”, 30 October 1978, p. 3.

¹²¹ National Archives and Records Service, “National Film, Video and Sound Archives”, Accessed: November 16, 2016: <http://www.national.archives.gov.za/>.

The financial blow that the introduction of television dealt the film industry gave impetus to a new initiative which came to dominate South African cinematic film production. Known as the “Bantu cinematic film industry”, cinematic film production for the black market was increasingly exploited by white South African producers after a new subsidy scheme was introduced in 1973 and the launch of SATV. The number of “Bantu” feature films that received subsidy payments, for example, increased from one in 1974 to 90 films (produced by 45 production companies) in 1985. The introduction of the “Bantu” (black) subsidy scheme can be traced back to a business proposition made by the Bantu Film Trust (Pty) Ltd (a company within the Film Trust Group) to the Department of Bantu Administration and Development in 1970. André Pieterse, referencing the successes achieved by Radio Bantu, argued that “most Bantus, just like any other race, preferred to be entertained in their own medium ... and a [cinematic] film industry and TV service which does not acknowledge or respect this will become a nonentity while becoming a disservice to the community.”¹²² Pieterse’s claim that South Africa, even though the majority of the country’s population was black and even with the subsidy scheme in place, failed to produce a Black cinematic film industry was fully justified. In its 74-year existence the local cinematic film industry produced only a handful of films aimed at the black market, of which all were produced by whites, and provided with an English soundtrack. Examples include *Zonk* (1950) and *Song of Africa* (1951) produced by African Film Productions, and Anthony Handley’s Film *Knockout* (1970).¹²³ At the time South Africa had 178 exhibition locations (many were community halls) designed for black, Coloured and/or Asian communities – in other words 312 fewer than the number of white cinemas.¹²⁴



¹²² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 9, Report by Bantu Film Trust: “Die Ontwikkeling van ‘n Bantoe-rolprentbedryf in Suid-Afrika”, April 1970, p. 2.

¹²³ Andre le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 42.

¹²⁴ Statistic provided in April 1970. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 9, Report by Bantu Film Trust: “Die Ontwikkeling van ‘n Bantoe-rolprentbedryf in Suid-Afrika”, April 1970, p. 7.

Illustration 15: Bantu Film Trust's Logo¹²⁵

Government, therefore, proposed to introduce a subsidy scheme for a black cinematic film industry based on a number of assumptions: the number of black cinema-goers was far less than of whites, as these communities were not in a financial position to pay the same admission fees; there were relatively few recreation facilities for blacks; cinematic film production provided black actors and technicians with opportunities for training; and the films could be utilised as a propaganda medium to influence both South Africans and foreigners.¹²⁶ On the last point, for example, A.G. Jackson (Department of Bantu Administration and Development) stated:

“the image that the film *Knockout* (for which assistance was requested) gives of the Bantu is that he is a sophisticated person with his own house, car, etc. – a favourable image is therefore conveyed.”¹²⁷

Since existing statistics regarding the average cost and potential income of black films were not available, government relied on figures formulated by the private sector. For example, Film Trust and Kinekor both estimated the potential average GBO of these films to be in the region of R40 000 to R43 000.¹²⁸ After consultations, the government drafted estimates which are illustrated in Table 30 (figures for films designed for the white market are included to provide perspective.

¹²⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 186, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 1, Correspondence from the Film Trust Group to the Department of Industries: “Subsidie Bantoefilms”, 26 April 1973, p. 1.

¹²⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 186, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 1, Meeting of the Department of Bantu Administration and Development: “Besprekings in verband met rolprente vir die bantoemark bestem”, 16 February 1970, p. 3.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹²⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 186, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 1, Concept proposal: “Bykomstige aansporing t.o.v. rolprente vir die bantoemarkvervaardig”, 13 March 1970, p. 30.

Table 30:¹²⁹ Average Cost, GBO, Cost of Admission Fee per Ticket, Attendance and Potential Market (Persons) of Films designed for the Black Market		
Audience	White	Black ("Bantu")
Cost	R200 000	R40 000
GBO	R310 000	R36 000
Admission Fee p/Ticket	47 cents	17 cents
Attendance	700 000	200 000
Potential Market (Persons)	1,4 million	0,3 million

A state-appointed committee – headed by Dr J. Adendorff (Chairperson of the Bantu Investment Corporation [BIC]) – subsequently devised a subsidy system according to the following formula:¹³⁰

$$\text{Subsidy} = k - (s * p * y\%)$$

- ‘k’ (R60 000) = average production cost plus a reasonable profit of a successful film.
- ‘s’ (250 000) = average number of tickets sold per film.
- ‘p’ (20 cents) = average entrance (ticket) fee per film.
- ‘y’ (30%) = the presentation of the box office income generated by the producer (s * p).

$$\text{Subsidy} = R60\,000 - (250\,000 * 20c * 30\%)$$

$$= R45\,000 \text{ or } 18c \text{ per seat}^{131}$$

What distinguished the black subsidy system (“B-Scheme”) from the original scheme (“A-Scheme”) was that the former was based on every ticket sold (18c p/ticket) during a film’s screening. The financial risks involved in low-budget productions were, therefore, reduced as incomes were immediately provided, whilst allowing admission tickets to be less expensive for the black communities. Maximum subsidy pay-out was limited to R45 000 to discourage the

¹²⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 186, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 1, Memorandum provided by the Minister of Economic Affairs to Cabinet: “Memorandum aan die Kabinet voorgelê deur die Minister van Ekonomiese Sake: Bykomstige aanspooring ten opsigte van rolprente vir die bantoemark vervaardig”, (n.d.), p. 4.

¹³⁰ All the figures provided were estimations provided by state.

¹³¹ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: R9-40. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 186, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 1, Memorandum provided to Cabinet: “Kabinetsbesluit: Bykomstige aanspooring ten opsigte van rolprente vir die bantumark vervaardig”, 2 August 1971, p. 9-10.

production of “expensive films”, seeing that the government – as discussed in the previous chapter – wished to limit state expenditure during and after the 1970s. The main actor and 75% of the cast had to be black, and only companies registered in South Africa could qualify for subsidisation.¹³² Subsidies were not limited to “Bantu-owned” production companies as the committee encouraged the involvement of whites:

“Film production requires expertise and techniques which the BIC or the Bantu does not have and, therefore, needs to be undertaken by Whites”.¹³³

In a policy reminiscent of the postponement of SATV’s phase two, the government recommended that a period¹³⁴ should be allowed in which blacks could master the necessary film techniques under the guidance of white employers. Apart from the state subsidy, financial assistance was also provided by the BIC. Created in 1959, the BIC functioned as a government-controlled body that endeavoured to promote industrial development, whilst serving as an investment and financial institution for blacks – particularly within the designated Bantu areas.¹³⁵ To encourage and stimulate Bantu film production, the BIC provided short-term economic aid through a film bank which assisted filmmakers in crossing (what was known as) the “interim stage”, i.e. the period between a film’s completion and its screening.¹³⁶ Furthermore, the BIC aimed to give financial assistance for the building of cinemas in “Bantu towns” in which population numbers were deemed appropriate. The construction of twelve theatres, each costing approximately R60 000,¹³⁷ was the initial objective.¹³⁸ The government maintained that mobile film projection units should be used in other parts of South Africa.

The B-Scheme subsidy system was officially approved on 28 February 1973.¹³⁹ The development of the industry was relatively slow from its initiation up until the introduction of television. BIC, for example, appropriated R500 000 in funds for the creation of the film bank

¹³² At least 51% of the shares of the production company had to be held by local South African citizens.

¹³³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 186, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 1, Memorandum provided to Cabinet: “Kabinetsbesluit: Bykomstige aansporing ten opsigte van rolprente vir die bantumark vervaardig”, 2 August 1971, p. 11-12.

¹³⁴ Not specified.

¹³⁵ *Bantu Investment Corporation Act no 34*, Statutes of the Union of South Africa (1959), p. 348.

¹³⁶ The period in which producers generate an income.

¹³⁷ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R2 million.

¹³⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report of the Department of Trade and Industry: “Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika (Verslag No. 1753)”, 21 December 1976, p. 26.

¹³⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 186, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 3, Cabinet’s decision to implement the B-scheme: “Uitbreiding van die subsidieskema vir die ontwikkeling van die rolprentbedryf vir die bantoe”, 28 February 1973, p. 1.

which was, however, utilised by only one producer. Only five theatres were constructed (seven less than the objective), whilst four films received subsidy pay-outs as indicated in Table 31.

Table 31:¹⁴⁰ B-Scheme Subsidy Pay-Outs, 1973/74-1974/75		
Year	Number	Subsidy Paid
1973/74	1	R 37 323
1974/75	3	R 95 975
Total	4	R 133 298

Tonie van der Merwe's *Nogomopho* (1974) was the first feature film produced in an African language, whilst *u-Deliwe* (1975) was the first motion-picture to utilise a black director, i.e. Simon Sebela – a figure who featured in over 34 local and international films.¹⁴¹ Demand in the black market was high, as illustrated by *u-Dewile*, which was viewed by over 2 million persons (a million more than what was generally perceived as a box office success).¹⁴² Capital was provided by Heyns Film and Television Ltd. (Heyns Films) – a company, managed by Thys Heyns, that produced some of the most expensive black films – which itself was later exposed as a Department of Information front company that endeavoured to “counter the Americanisation of South African Blacks.”¹⁴³

Subsidy amendments were made after the introduction of SATV with the maximum pay-out limit increasing to R70 000 in September 1977.¹⁴⁴ Whilst the number of films produced for the white market decreased, black film production increased exponentially. Fourteen films qualified for subsidy between September 1977 and October of 1979, whilst 11 films were produced in 1980. However, the government argued that, apart from the films produced by Heyns Films and Bayeta Films (a production company managed by Tonie van der Merwe), the general quality of the productions was “extremely poor”. The subsidy scheme offered business

¹⁴⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 6, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 3, Report of the Department of Trade and Industry: “Ondersoek na die Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf in Suid-Afrika (Verslag No. 1753)”, 21 December 1976, p. 26.

¹⁴¹ Other examples include *Diamonds are Dangerous* (1961) and *Mapantsula* (1988). *Daily News*, June 15, 2016, “KwaZulu-Natal Commission celebrates 100 years of films”, p. 8.

¹⁴² Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 63.

¹⁴³ Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 257.

¹⁴⁴ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R2,7 million. SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 2, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 6, Memorandum: “’n Oorsig van die doelmagtigheid van die gewysigde skema sedert 1 September 1977”, (n.d.), p. 12.

opportunists and novice producers a chance to produce films for an under-exploited market – most of which had no interest in developing the black film industry. James Murray, co-owner of Murray-Metsing Films (a white-black partnership with Simon Metsing), argued: “Most of the White producers did not start out as film people. There were school teachers, plumbers and builders...”¹⁴⁵ The scheme, however, also attracted the attention of established cinematic film producers who sought to generate alternative incomes to counter the effect of SATV.¹⁴⁶ As a result, production quality remained low with budgets averaging between R30 000 and R50 000, with productions sometimes lasting only a few days.¹⁴⁷

Despite the involvement of blacks being an objective of the scheme, they remained absent as cinematic film producers. During the late 1980s only one registered production company – SASA Films – was entirely owned by blacks.¹⁴⁸ The result, according to Martin Botha, James Murray and Keyan Tomaselli, was that most filmmakers either displayed little regard for, or a lack of knowledge of, the black experience and its values.¹⁴⁹ A theme that became synonymous with the black production industry was the justification of segregation in South Africa. The urbanisation of blacks was depicted negatively as opposed to life in the black ‘homelands’ (or Bantustans), which was portrayed as more suitable for the ‘black lifestyle’. Examples include Heyns Films/Tonie van der Merwe’s *Nogomopho* (1974), Bayeta Films’ *Vuma* (1978) and Igoli Films’ *Isiviko* (1979).¹⁵⁰

Apart from the films produced under the A-scheme, the quantity of black cinematic productions kept increasing despite the introduction of TV2 and TV3 in 1981 (Table 32).

¹⁴⁵ Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 264.

¹⁴⁶ This will be illustrated in the section on *Kavalier Films* as a case study.

¹⁴⁷ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 60.

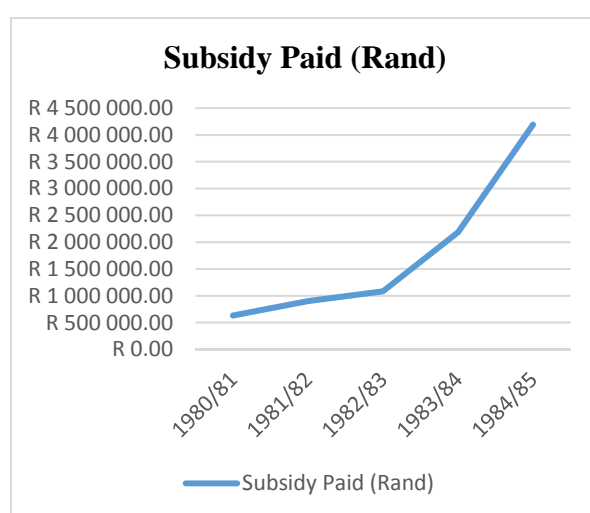
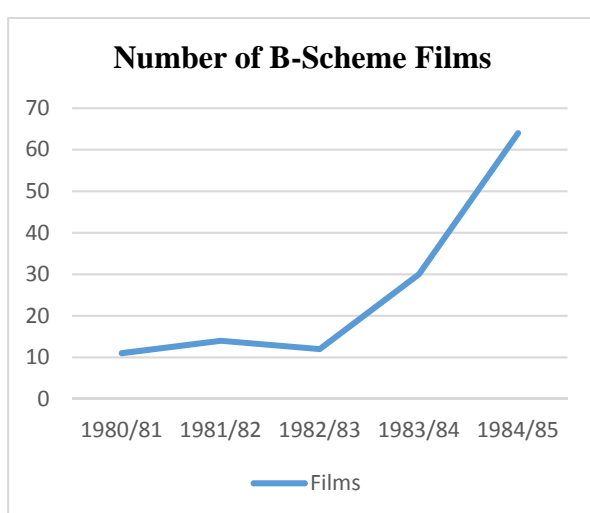
¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

¹⁴⁹ Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1896-2010*, (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 115; Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 259; Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 66.

¹⁵⁰ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 71.

Table 32:¹⁵¹ Number of B-scheme films produced, 1980/81-1984/85

Fiscal Year	Films	Subsidy Paid ¹⁵² (Rand)
1980/81	11	631 380
1981/82	14	901 738
1982/83	12	1 084 057
1983/84	30	2 183 475
1984/85	64	4 190 343



Television did not discourage producers from making films for South Africa's black market. Screen advertising in black cinemas, for example, was estimated to have increased 79% from 1981 to 1982.¹⁵³ Many reasons could account for this. This thesis reflects on two primary issues: the lack of black access to television, and the additional amendments made to the subsidy scheme which, in turn, attracted further exploitation. In 1985 research conducted by the SABC indicated that an average of 1,949 million adults tuned into weekly broadcasts made by TV2 and/or 3.¹⁵⁴ The black population of South Africa consisted of 24,4 million people at the

¹⁵¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 187, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 4, Correspondence (C.F. Scheepers): "Assistance to the Local Film Industry: South African Film and Video Institute", 1985, p. 3.

¹⁵² Subsidies paid are deliberately included, as will be discussed.

¹⁵³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 186, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 3, *Sunday Express* article: "Mini-boom reflected in January totals: SA advertisers step up their drive for Black consumers", 18 April 1982, p. 24.

¹⁵⁴ SABC, Radio Park, SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1985, p. 18.

time.¹⁵⁵ At the time the SABC faced various challenges stemming from the socio-economic, political and geographical issues in South Africa. During the launch of TV2/3, for example, only 25% of the black population lived in areas that could receive TV transmissions.¹⁵⁶ The economic conditions affecting black South Africans made television less affordable. In 1980 and 1985 the average income per capita for blacks was estimated at R5 107 and R5 423, respectively, as opposed to R46 670 and R48 370 for whites.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, the availability of electricity (or otherwise) was also a factor, considering that two-thirds of South Africa's largely rural populace was without electricity during the 1980s. The SABC channels TV2/3 were, therefore, not regarded as much of a threat by cinematic filmmakers. Amendments made to the B-scheme applied from 1 April 1981. The maximum amount of subsidy payable was increased to R80 000 per film. If a film's admission tickets were sold for 21c each or more, subsidy was paid at 21c per ticket sold. In cases where tickets were sold for less than 21c, the amount of subsidy paid was equivalent to the price of the ticket sold.¹⁵⁸ The amendments were made mainly in response to inflation, which contributed to the rise of production costs.¹⁵⁹

Problems with both distribution and exhibition impeded the development of the industry. In June 1970 André Pieterse proposed that the creation and expansion of a black film distribution and screening network could only occur after black communities had familiarised themselves with the idea of a cinema.¹⁶⁰ Mobile units and multi-purpose theatres would raise the desired "bioscope awareness". Pieterse subsequently received secret payments from the Department of Information to erect a "Bantu" cinema chain across South Africa, but the project was never realised. The money (£475 000 in total) was instead utilised for the production of *Golden Rendezvous* (1977).¹⁶¹ The secret funding received by Pieterse formed part of what would be

¹⁵⁵ Servaas van der Berg & Megan Louw, "Changing patterns of South African income distribution: Towards time series estimates of distribution and poverty", Paper to the Conference of the Economic Society of South Africa, Stellenbosch, 17-19 September 2003, p. 11.

¹⁵⁶ SABC, Radio Park. SABC Media Library, Annual Reports of the SABC, 1981, p. 123.

¹⁵⁷ Servaas van der Berg & Megan Louw, "Changing patterns of South African income distribution: Towards time series estimates of distribution and poverty", Paper to the Conference of the Economic Society of South Africa, Stellenbosch, 17-19 September 2003, p. 11.

¹⁵⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 186, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 3, Amendments made to the B-scheme (Department of Industries, Commerce and Tourism): Financial Assistance to the Local Film Industry: Films for distribution mainly among Black persons", 8 October 1981, p. 3.

¹⁵⁹ Subsidy of R70 000 paid in January 1977 – value in 2016 taking into account inflation is approximately R2,4 million. Subsidy of R70 000 paid in January 1981 – value in 2016 taking into account inflation is approximately R1,5 million.

¹⁶⁰ SAB, Bantoe Administrasie en Ontwikkeling (BAO), 11996, Addendum: N181/1, Volume 1, Minutes: "Ontwikkeling van Bantoe-rolprentbedryf in Suid-Afrika", 19 Junie 1970, p. 59.

¹⁶¹ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 59.

known as the “Information Scandal”. It was revealed that the government had misappropriated funds to set up or support, amongst other things, Louis Luyt’s *The Citizen*,¹⁶² Thor Communications and as mentioned, Heyns Films and Pietserse’s cinematic distribution aspirations. The Ministry of Information was consequently abolished, and the scandal led to B.J. Vorster resigning as State President. In 1982 only 30 cinemas operated in black residential areas. Soweto, with a population of 1,25 million at the time, for example, had three cinemas.¹⁶³ Mobile distribution remained the foundation of the black cinematic film industry since, according to Thys Heyns, establishing a cinema chain required a monumental investment – i.e. “between R30-R40 million.”¹⁶⁴ The mobile distribution system relied on an individual (an operator) with a copy of a feature, a vehicle and projector, who travelled across the country to screen the film at as many venues as possible. The operator negotiated with the owner/manager of the venue (in many cases a school principal or vice-principal) to determine his fee for a film’s screening. Subsidy was paid in respect of commercial shows including theatres, drive-ins, halls or any location where the public might view the film on payment of an admission fee. However, subsidy was also payable in situations where cinema returns were unobtainable, in other words, films which were hired out for a fixed amount and not on a percentage basis. In this case, a certificate showing the date and venue of the screening, the number of tickets sold and relevant prices, the amount of the film rental paid and the name and address of the exhibitor needed to be signed by the exhibitor or a representative.¹⁶⁵ In scenarios where admission tickets were not sold – for example, groups shows at compounds – subsidy equivalent to the amount of the film rental was paid. The system was introduced to compensate for the lack of screening venues as well as to provide recreation for impoverished black communities. However, this approach was ultimately subject to widespread exploitation and corruption among operators (who were employed by film producers) and ‘exhibitors’ as the system was entirely dependent on honest reporting. James Murray argued in *Ethnic Cinema: How Greed Killed the Industry* that there was a problem with mobile distribution:

“It is supremely important to bear in mind that there existed an ‘anything goes’ situation. Films were shown in beer halls and shebeens, churches, community centres and even open-air cattle

¹⁶² The only major English-language newspaper favourable to the National Party.

¹⁶³ The names of the cinemas: Eyethu (a 1000 seater), Lily and Boiketlong.

¹⁶⁴ *The Star*, 19 January 1982, “South Africa’s sleeping giant”, p. 21.

¹⁶⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 186, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 3, Amendments made to the B-scheme (Department of Industries, Commerce and Tourism): Financial Assistance to the Local Film Industry: Films for distribution mainly among Black persons, 8 October 1981, p. 6.

kraals... In such circumstances controls and checks were useless. The nearest thing to an accurate check was to visit a hall after the event and to cram as many people into it as possible.”¹⁶⁶

Despite the corruption, cinematic film production remained profitable as producers claimed that more than a million black South Africans viewed a production each month.¹⁶⁷ Consequently, producers established the Black Feature Film Producers Association (BFFPA) in January 1983 with Tonie van der Merwe, Director of a number of black film production companies, acting as Chairman. The birth of the BFFPA could largely be attributed to the VVRSA refusing to accept Black film production companies as members, because these companies’ activities were deemed to be amateurish.¹⁶⁸ The BFFPA, which had approximately twenty members,¹⁶⁹ was established with the objective of further expanding the black cinematic filmmaking industry. South Africa’s production industry, therefore, consisted of two competing organisations that reflected the broader socio-economic conditions of apartheid. Filmmaking was characterised according to race, whilst blacks had no authority over an industry that was, nonetheless, created for and dependent on their support.

Between 1986 to 1990 235 B-scheme feature films were produced, over 600 mobile units operated throughout South Africa, while the maximum amount of subsidy payable per film was raised by a further R20 000.¹⁷⁰ Corruption, however, remained an issue, with various state departments endeavouring to assert some sort of control over the matter. The industry was ultimately transferred to the Department of Home Affairs in 1989 as it had suitable resources to fully address the state of corruption. An investigation in 1990 exposed the full extent of discrepancies within the industry, consequently compelling government to abolish the B-scheme altogether in the same year.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁶ Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 260.

¹⁶⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 186, Addendum: N101/3/6/1, Volume 3, *Beeld* article: “Vermaak vir swartes so beskerm”, 13 September 1984, p. 7.

¹⁶⁸ Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 61.

¹⁶⁹ The companies comprising the organisation included: Aim Productions, Bayeta Films, Bhekhile Films, Benher Films, Bensusan Films, Conlyn Films, Cyesta Films, Eagle Films, Igoli Films, Kundalini Films, Multi Films, Nicovista Films, Optima Films, Satellite Films, Spectrum Films, Taurus Films, Tugela Films, Tycoon Films, Visualink Films and Umziki Films.

¹⁷⁰ Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 265.

SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 2, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 5, Correspondence (Bureau for Information): “Hulp aan die plaaslike rolprentbedryf: Bepaling van kwotas ten opsigte van swart rolprente vir die 1989/90 finansiële jaar ingevolge die B-skema”, 28 April 1989, p.1.

¹⁷¹ Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 265.

The End of *Kavalier Films*

The introduction of SATV had a particularly harmful impact on the cinematic operations of *Kavalier Films*. Chairperson Schalk J. Botha stated as early as November 1976 that the effects were “almost destructive.”¹⁷² For example, the producer’s average income generated in drive-in theatres dropped 45% in 1976.¹⁷³ What made this figure so worrisome was that drive-in theatres accounted for 70% of *Kavalier*’s revenue. Furthermore, the fact that most drive-in theatres shortened a film’s running time from two to one week also had a substantial effect. Even without the introduction of Television, this meant that the GBO, would drop 30%.¹⁷⁴ As a result, *Kavalier Films* developed four main strategies to counter the effects of television.

First, the ambition of producing at least three films a year had to be scrapped. Films for both the local and international markets were produced much more selectively – thus resembling the strategy adopted by *Mimosa Films*. The result was that, apart from the films for which production had already started in 1975 (*Hank, Hennery and Friend* and *Karate Olympia*), *Kavaliers* failed to release a single (A-scheme) motion picture until the final amendments were made to the subsidy system which applied after August 1977.¹⁷⁵ However, *Kavalier Films* still needed an income, whilst its search for suitable stories continued. As such, a contract was negotiated with Satbel to distribute films produced before 1976. Examples included *Debbie* (1965), *Hoor My Lied* (1967), *Jy is my Liefeling* (1968) and *Die Geheim van Nantes* (1969). *Crazy People*, released on 28 September 1977, was the first feature completed by *Kavalier Films* after the new scheme came into effect.¹⁷⁶ At first prospects appeared “promising” as the film grossed R174 000 within two months.¹⁷⁷ *Kavalier Films*’ optimism was short-lived, unfortunately, as the film’s revenue generated during the school holidays (December/January) failed to meet the estimates. *Crazy People*, for example, was exhibited by 28 drive-in theatres across South Africa, earning an average of R1 550 p/theatre – R1 250 (or 55%) less than

¹⁷²GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 4. (1/35) Chairman Report: “Voorsitterverslag vir die jaar geëindig”, 26 November 1976, p. 1.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 5. (2/12) Minutes: “Notule van die bestuursvergadering”, 19 Maart 1976, p. 3.

¹⁷⁵ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 1. (4/91) Agendas: “Direksievergaderingnotule”, 25 November 1977, p. 175.

¹⁷⁶ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 1. (4/92) Agendas: “Direksievergaderingnotule”, 25 November 1977, p. 181.

¹⁷⁷ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: Approximately R 5,5 million.

expected.¹⁷⁸ By October 1979 box office revenues indicated that the film still had to recover R50 790 to cover the production expenditure.¹⁷⁹

The second strategy was that the attempts to provide a service to SATV, either through the production and/or dubbing of programmes, needed to be sustained. *Kavalier Films* had succeeded in supplying programmes for the SABC, although few in number, mostly a series of documentaries and short films. In June 1977, for example, the SABC commissioned *Kavalier Films* to produce a 10-part documentary series on the SADF.¹⁸⁰ The duration of each program would be 40 minutes, whilst the producer earned R220 000 for the entire series. However, the offer presented by the SABC meant that *Kavalier Films* would produce a series fully aware that yielding a substantial profit would not be possible. This was the general situation as most of the programmes produced, such as *Spitfire* (a short TV film), *Hengel* (a documentary series), the 300 minutes' worth of journal programme material created for the "Bantu-TV service" and films dubbed into Afrikaans (for example, *Zoo Gang* and *Links and Regs van die Autobaan*), only covered the costs of the various productions. The reason was that *Kavalier Films* aimed to establish a productive working relationship with the SABC. The producer believed that sustaining an "unblemished" relationship would possibly allow *Kavalier Films* to receive more substantial payments for future TV opportunities.¹⁸¹

Third, *Kavalier Films* experimentally produced films aimed at South Africa's black population. Two films, *Abashokobezi* and *Unokukhanya*, were produced during 1976. Since *Kavalier Films* had yet to undertake such an endeavour, it consulted individuals such as Justus Tsungu, a black radio presenter, to better understand the needs of the African market.¹⁸² Production was initially halted as a result of the political unrest which followed the Soweto Uprisings in June 1976.¹⁸³ When the films were ultimately distributed, attendance yet again failed to meet expectations. The political unrest in the black communities was held responsible for this, as no film

¹⁷⁸ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 7V. 6(1) Reports: "Kort Verslag", 12 January 1978, p. 4.

Other films produced and released in 1977/1978 included *Dr. Marais Hugo*, *Billy Boy* and *Die Spaanse Vlieg*. H.B. Thom retired as Head of the Script Committee in June 1978. Consequently, the documents in the GBD (H.B. Thom Collections) did not provide a full account of the incomes and expenditures created by these films.

¹⁷⁹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 2, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 6, Memorandum: "'n Oorsig van die doelmagtigheid van die gewysigde skema sedert 1 September 1977", 17 April 1980, p. Appendix A.

¹⁸⁰ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 1. (4/89) Agendas: "Direksievergaderingsnotule", 24 June 1977, p. 165.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

¹⁸² GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 1. (4/80) Agendas: "Direksievergaderingsnotule", 25 June 1976, p. 97.

¹⁸³ This was a series of protests organised by Soweto high school students which started on 16 June 1976. The protests were a response to the government introducing a policy requiring black students to be taught in Afrikaans as medium of instruction. Ali K. Hlongwane, "The Mapping of the June 16 1976 Soweto Student Uprisings Routes: Past Recollections and Present Reconstruction(s)", *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 19(2007), p. 7.

screenings could be held in areas such as Witbank, Krugersdorp, Diepkloof, Roodepoort, Randfontein, Benoni and Soweto.¹⁸⁴ Theatres in these areas were temporarily closed by various sections within the Department of Bantu Affairs. The unrest that consumed black South Africa ultimately convinced *Kavalier Films* to permanently discontinue the production of “Bantu Films.”¹⁸⁵

Lastly, the producer investigated the possibilities of expanding its operations by utilising new video technologies, more specifically the conversion of film into video, a medium which had yet to be exploited in South Africa’s audio-visual industry. The business undertaking, initially known as the “*Video-projek*”,¹⁸⁶ was a direct response to the scarcity of employment offered by SABC-TV.¹⁸⁷ The subsidiary, ultimately registered as Video RSA with Ivan Hall acting as manager, became operational in March 1977. Video RSA was established mainly as a producer of video-tape productions for commercial producers, advertisers and broadcast TV stations, aiming to become “the pre-eminent commercial TV facility first in its field.”¹⁸⁸ However, despite its potential, Video RSA was struggling to make inroads into the audio-visual industry. Two main reasons were held responsible, i.e. the reaction against the video medium by a film-orientated South African industry and public, and the quality of the service itself.¹⁸⁹ Expanding upon the latter point, Ivan Hall pointed out that the facilities at Video RSA’s studio were used “before it was professionally orientated, both in engineering quality and service.”¹⁹⁰ Video RSA, consequently, suffered a damaged image.

Because all four strategies failed to meet expectations, *Kavalier Films* faced the possibility of going into liquidation. In April 1979 Amalgamated Film and Television Investments – controlled by Irene Film Laboratories (Irene Films), South Africa’s most renowned film processing laboratory and subsidiary of Satbel – acquired a controlling interest in *Kavalier Films*.¹⁹¹ The takeover by Irene Films was largely motivated by acquiring control of Video RSA, thus allowing Satbel to gain further control of South Africa’s audio-visual industry as

¹⁸⁴ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 5. (2/14) Minutes: “Notule van die bestuursvergadering”, 16 February 1977, p. 2.

¹⁸⁵ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV.1. (4/86) Agendas: “Direksievergaderingsnotule”, 25 February 1977, p. 141.

¹⁸⁶ Video project.

¹⁸⁷ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 5. (2/14) Minutes: “Notule van die bestuursvergadering”, 16 February 1977, p. 1.

¹⁸⁸ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 7V. 5(7) Television: “Proposal for organisational system for Video RSA”, 15 November 1977, p. 1.

¹⁸⁹ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 1. (4/89) Agendas: “Notule van ‘n bestuursvergadering”, 8 September 1977, p. 1.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁹¹ GLD, HBT, 191 KAV. 6K. (173) Correspondence (Letter addressed to H.B. Thom): “Halfjaarklikse Verslag”, 2 April 1979, p. 1.

part of its expansion process.¹⁹² Messrs B. Vlok, R.B. Honeyborne and Professor B. van Deventer subsequently resigned as directors and were replaced by P.J. Zimmerman (Managing Director of Irene Films), J. Rijfkoel and C.G. de Kock. Apart from managing Video RSA, the acquisition entailed Irene Films being involved in all sectors of Kavalier's operations, including the production of feature films. Two productions were completed and distributed within the same year, i.e. *Pretoria, o Pretoria* and *Wat jy Saai*.¹⁹³ However, as regular cinematic film production for South Africa's white audiences stagnated, so too did Kavalier's activities, considering that the production house – once South Africa's most prolific – failed to produce a film in 1980. In 1981 *Kavalier Films* released its last feature film, *Kill and Kill Again*, a sequel to *Karate Olympia* (1976). Kavalier Studios, located in Northcliff Hill, Johannesburg, was later converted into the World's View apartment complex.¹⁹⁴

“Charlie Chaplin of the Bosveld”:¹⁹⁵ Uys's Continued Success despite SATV's Introduction

Despite the increasingly challenging climate, Jamie Uys/Mimosa Films still managed to produce box office successes, such as *Funny People* (1976) and especially *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980). However, when analysing the quality of a film a major challenge is that an individual's critical perspective is based on his/her own personal standards, moulded by experience and ideology. *Watchmen* (2009), produced by Legendary Pictures and DC Comics, serves as a more contemporary example. The neo-noir-styled super-hero film received conflicting reviews from audiences and critics. Its dark satirical take on the genre was praised by, for example, Kyle Smith (writing for the *New York Post*), which compared the film to the work of one of America's most iconic producers and directors, Stanley Kubrick.¹⁹⁶ However, *The Irish Time's* reviewer, Donald Clarke, commented that the film “turned into a colossal animated storyboard, augmented by indifferent performances and some moronically obvious

¹⁹² *Die Transvaler*, April 6, 1979, Phillippa Breytenbach. “Sanlam se Filmhup word groter: Kavalier films oorgeneem”, p. 1.

¹⁹³ Andre le Roux & Lilla Fourie, *Filmverlede: Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm*, (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 217.

¹⁹⁴ *The Citizen*, January 13, 2009, Annette Bayne. “Silver screen beginnings: The history of South African's film industry lies in the heart of Joburg”, p. 3.

¹⁹⁵ Headline of a newspaper article in *Die Burger*, which references Uys's film *Daar Doer in Die Bosveld* and famous American comedy star, Charlie Chaplin. *Die Burger*, August 13, 2011, Leon Van Nierop, “Charlie Chaplin van die Bosveld”, p. 10.

¹⁹⁶ Director of films such as *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) and *The Shining* (1980). Lou Lumenick, “Is Zack Snyder the new Kubrick?”, *New York Post*, March 4, 2009, Accessed: 15 December 2016: <http://nypost.com/2009/03/04/is-zack-snyder-the-new-kubrick/>.

music cues.”¹⁹⁷ The same critical rule certainly applies when reviewing the work of Jamie Uys/Mimosa Films. What must be mentioned, however, is that Uys had a healthy working relationship with government since the formation of the MPPA, enjoyed both local and international acclaim before the introduction of SATV and had the financial means to produce large-scale productions (relative to the South African context), particularly after the release of *Beautiful People* (1974). This is illustrated by the following films:

***Funny People* (1976)**

Funny People was the first “candid camera”-type comedy produced in South Africa. The film is not so much an example of the quality of Uys’ work, but rather one which highlights Uys’ international renown based on his previous works. The roots of the film can be traced back to 1969, when Uys experimented with the concept whilst producing the short film *Marching to Pretoria*.¹⁹⁸ After Allan Hunt, creator of *Candid Camera* (broadcast in South Africa in 1977),¹⁹⁹ gave Mimosa Films permission to use the concept, filming commenced. *Funny People* was immensely popular upon its release, becoming the first local film to gross approximately R250 000 within its first week, whilst in addition receiving a subsidy in excess of R700 000.²⁰⁰ By 1990 the feature had grossed R4,2 million in South Africa alone, which made it the 5th highest grossing film in the country at the time.²⁰¹ Uys’ acclaim was perhaps best illustrated when Dr Boet Troskie went to sell the film for foreign distribution at the Cannes Film Festival: “He successfully sold the film for distribution in most countries worldwide. They bought the movie without having seen it – the name Jamie Uys clinched the deal.”²⁰² The success of *Funny People* spawned the production of numerous candid camera films during the late 1970s, such as Kavalier’s *Crazy People*, and in particular the 1980s. Uys released *Funny People 2* in 1983, but it was local comedian Leon Schuster who would later become synonymous with the concept in the later 1980s, a reputation that continues to this day.

¹⁹⁷ Donald Clarke, “New DVD’s”, *Irish Times*, July 24, 2009, Accessed: 15 December 2016:

<https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/new-dvds-1.706072>.

¹⁹⁸ Mimosa Films, “Funny People”, Accessed: 12 December 2016:

<http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/Archive/Film/78/funny-people>.

¹⁹⁹ Andre le Roux & Lilla Fourie, Filmverlede: *Die Geskiedenis van die Suid-Afrikaanse Speelfilm* (Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, 1982), p. 177.

²⁰⁰ The maximum subsidy of R300 000 was only introduced a year after the release of *Funny People*. Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), 36.

Mimosa Films, “Funny People”, Accessed: 12 December 2016:

<http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/Archive/Film/78/funny-people>.

²⁰¹ Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 99.

²⁰² Mimosa Films, “Funny People”, Accessed: 12 December 2016:

<http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/Archive/Film/78/funny-people>.

Examples of Schuster's films are *You must be Joking* (1987) and *Oh Schucks... It's Schuster* (1989) which had earned R5,5 million in box office revenue in South Africa by 1990.²⁰³

***The Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980)**

Examples of Jamie Uys's endeavour to produce films based on quality rather than quantity had been demonstrated when he left *Kavalier Films* to produce features for Mimosa Films. This again became evident when, after a year of the VVRSA's existence, Boet Troskie and Jamie Uys retired as members of the Association. The company's strongest criticism of the Afrikaans cinematic film industry was that only the best foreign films were distributed in South Africa, whilst all locally produced films, "good or bad", were screened, consequently damaging the image of the industry.²⁰⁴ Uys reached the pinnacle of his career with the production and release of the somewhat controversial *The Gods Must be Crazy* (1980) and its sequel *The Gods must be Crazy 2* (1989). The sequel became the second highest grossing film in South Africa by 1990, earning R6.3 million in GBO (to be outdone only by the American production *Dirty Dancing* [1987]).²⁰⁵ However, since the timeframe of this thesis extends to 1986, *The Gods Must Be Crazy* will be discussed in more detail.

The film was distributed by Ster-Kinekor in South Africa and Twentieth-Century-Fox in the USA. The plot revolves around the life of Xi (played by N!xau) of the San tribe of Ju'/Hoansi bushmen living in the Kalahari Desert. When a Coca-Cola bottle is thrown out of an airplane, the tribe perceives it as an artefact from their gods and utilise it for multiple purposes. However, this gift from the gods soon becomes a cause for envy and ultimately friction within the tribe, since every member wanted to use the one bottle. Xi, after consulting the elders, decided on making a pilgrimage to find the edge of the world and dispose the bottle there. He subsequently encountered people from other civilisations, some of whom included biologist Andrew Steyn (Marius Weyers), school teacher Kate Thompson (Sandra Prinsloo), guerrilla troops who were being pursued by local government forces, and a safari tour guide called Jack Hind (Nick de Jager). Xi is jailed for an attack on livestock, but Steyn soon applied to employ Xi as a tracker for the remainder of his sentence. Kate, along with her pupils, meanwhile, were taken hostage

²⁰³ This made the film the third highest grossing film in the country at the time. Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 99.

²⁰⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF, 2, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 5, Correspondence between Mimosa Films and J.C. Heunis (Minister of Economic Affairs): "S.A. Rolprentbedryf met betrekking tot buitelandse verdienste en subsidie", 1 September 1978, Appendix B.

²⁰⁵ Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls and Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 99.

and used as human shields by the guerrilla troops in their attempt to escape into a neighbouring country. Xi and Steyn's fieldwork resulted in them discovering that the wildlife they were observing was in the path of the guerrillas' escape. They eventually save Kate and the students after immobilising the terrorists. Xi finally reaches God's Window and is convinced that he had reached the end of the world, since the landscape below the cliff was obscured by low clouds. Xi throws the bottle off the cliff and returns to his tribe.²⁰⁶

The Gods Must Be Crazy has been a source of debate amongst academics and critics trying to establish whether the film is premised on content of a racially insensitive nature. Linda Hunter (at the time a Professor in the Department of African Languages and Literature at the University of Wisconsin-Madison), for example, maintained that the feature emphasised the uncivilised customs of a civilised people.²⁰⁷ Barbara Moss, in "*Gods Must Be Crazy or Apartheid in Technicolour*", accused the film of subtle racism considering that the film was produced during the Bush War. She particularly referenced the role blacks played, labelling it as most disturbing:

"The government that is attacked is black run, but woefully inept. The terrorists are also black... They too are incredibly inept. The fact that the South African government is presently fighting Angolan soldiers, who are aided by Cubans, makes the inferences all the more insidious."²⁰⁸

Regardless, *Gods Must Be Crazy* received numerous international awards including the Grand Prix at Switzerland's Festival du Film du Comedie pour in 1981, the Award of Excellence by the Film Advisory Board in 1984, the Award of Merit by the Academy of Family Films and Family Television in 1985, and the Golden Scroll by the Academy of Science Fiction and Horror Films in 1985, to name a few. Within less than a year of its release the film had grossed over R22 million in the USA and R200 million worldwide (R80 million in Japan, which was a record at the time).²⁰⁹ By 1990 *The Gods Must Be Crazy* grossed R4,1 million in South Africa. In 1983, as a result of Jamie Uys's contribution to the Afrikaans cinematic film production industry, he received an honorary doctorate from the University of Port Elizabeth and the Decoration for Meritorious Service by State President, Marais Viljoen.²¹⁰

²⁰⁶ IMDb, "The Gods Must Be Crazy: Plot Summary", Accessed: 15 December 2016: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0080801/plotsummary>.

²⁰⁷ Linda Hunter, "The Gods Must Be Crazy – Unsolicited Opinions", *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 14 (1985), p. 34.

²⁰⁸ Barbara Moss, "The Gods Must Be Crazy or Apartheid in Technicolor", *Black Camera* 1 (1985), p. 6.

²⁰⁹ *The Citizen*, May 13, 1985, "Jamie Uys 'won't treat apartheid in film'", p. 8.

²¹⁰ *Die Transvaler*, January 29, 1983, Johan Allers, "Jamie Uys kry doktorsgraad", p. 2.



Illustration 16: A scene in *Gods Must Be Crazy* in which the Ju'/'Hoansi people (San tribe) study the famous Coke-bottle.²¹¹

Subsidy Amendment in 1981: The Struggle against SATV Continues

By 1980 television dampened the production of A-scheme films to such an extent that only eight films were released, i.e. the lowest since 1969. Meanwhile, André Scholtz, a MBA graduate and former employee of Kinekor, had become Chairperson of the VVRSA, whilst Tommie Meyer (previously employed by *Kavalier Films*) was appointed Deputy.²¹² The election of Scholtz was much needed at the time, according to Tomaselli, as he had a long-term vision for the expansion of the industry with the adoption of a five-year plan as a short-term solution.²¹³ The VVRSA proposed that films produced for both the local and foreign market needed to qualify for subsidy. Because of the dramatic increase of production costs, a higher subsidy should be paid, whilst the subsidy limit had to be disposed of, thus providing local filmmakers with the confidence to produce high-budget films similar to *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (1980). Local films produced simply for the South African market should continue to receive subsidies. Art/non-commercial films should be subsidised if a distribution network, for example a film society, could act as a kind of distributor to provide aspiring local filmmakers with the necessary experience before venturing into the commercial filmmaking sector.²¹⁴ These recommendations never materialised, however, as the subsidy scheme remained unchanged until April 1981 as a result of disruptions caused by a cabinet reshuffle. The industry

²¹¹ Mimosas Film Group, "Feature Films- *Gods Must Be Crazy*", Accessed: 16 March 2017: <http://www.mimosafilms.co.za/Feature/1/the-gods-must-be-crazy>.

²¹² SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 14, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 7, Correspondence from the VVRSA: "Die Vereniging van Vollelengte Rolprentvervaardigers van Suid-Afrika", 18 July 1979, p. 1.

²¹³ Keyan Tomaselli. *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 37.

²¹⁴ The NFB had the same objective, but the training would be provided by the private sector.

was left frustrated by the stretched-out process, with the government being approached by filmmakers on a “weekly basis.”²¹⁵ Feeling uncertain about the future of South Africa’s cinematic film industry, Scholtz temporarily left the film production industry.²¹⁶ Scholtz would make his return as an associate producer of Leon Schuster’s highly successful *You must be Joking!* (1986). The film had grossed R3,7 million in South Africa by 1990 (7th highest at the time).²¹⁷

Amendments to the A-scheme were introduced in April 1981 that were based on the same sliding-scale system established in 1977.

Table 33:²¹⁸ Subsidy Scheme which Applied from 1 April 1981	
NBO (Rand)	Tariff (%)
< 150 001	80
150 001 to 250 000	70
250 001 to 350 000	60
>350 000	50
Maximum	R 300 000

The amendments applied to both Afrikaans and English films to encourage productions for the foreign market. The threshold was lowered to R75 000 per film. However, the amendments were short-lived as new changes were introduced which applied from October 1981. A concession was made to apply the new regulations to films produced since 1 April 1981. Subsidy was payable at a rate of 70% for the first R1 million received in NBO revenue and 50% for the next R1 million. Therefore, the maximum subsidy payable was increased to R1,2 million,²¹⁹ whilst the threshold of R100 000 (to compensate for the increased subsidy) was reintroduced. These amendments applied to both English and Afrikaans films, as well as films screened in South West Africa and states within the Customs Union Agreement, i.e. Botswana,

²¹⁵ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 3, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 7, Correspondence: “Ons word nou byna...”, 17 February 1981, (n.p.).

²¹⁶ Andre Scholtz, e-mail message to Coenraad J. Coetzee, December 27, 2016.

²¹⁷ Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1981*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 99.

²¹⁸ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 2, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 6, Memorandum: “’n Oorsig van die doelmagtigheid van die gewysigde skema sedert 1 September 1977”, 17 April 1980, p. 12.

²¹⁹ Value in 2016 taking into account inflation: approximately R22,7 million.

Lesotho and Swaziland. The R900 000 increase in the maximum subsidy payable was introduced to compensate for the increase in production costs and lessen the financial risks involved in producing large-scale productions in an endeavour to eliminate the stigma associated with the local production industry.²²⁰

Afrikaans Cinema's Television Films

"Everyone wanted to make TV programmes with the SABC ... The risk of [making] TV programmes is continuity ... There wasn't a financial risk, there was a popularity risk. You will not be employed if people did not like your product." – Franz Marx²²¹

From 1980 some of the most established Afrikaans directors/producers were involved in the production of SABC-TV programmes, including Elmo de Witt, Manie van Rensburg, Koos Roets and Franz Marx.²²² The popularity of SABC-TV produced a period in which television-based cinematic films overwhelmed the Afrikaans production industry – *Brigadiers Films* (owned by Albie Venter at the time) being the most famous example. For instance, feature films *Nommer Asseblief* (1981), *Verkeerde Nommer* (1982) and *Bosveldhotel* (1985) were based on TV series with the same titles. The TV-derivative films were financially lucrative (especially with the assistance of the 1981 subsidy amendments) as indicated by the feature film *Skollie* (1984), based on the 1982 TV series *Vyfster*. By 1988 *Skollie*, produced for R595 650, earned R1,048 million in box office income (R262 113 accruing to the producer) and a subsidy of R724 225, meaning that a total income of R986 338 was accumulated by the producer.²²³ However, the imitation of television productions caused further damage to the image of the Afrikaans films. Leon Van Nierop, a renowned Afrikaans film critic, argued that these films "very quickly became a slavish server of television" since the features, produced purely for financial reasons, utilised TV techniques which meant that they failed to adopt

²²⁰ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 3, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 7, Press statement issued by the Deputy Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism: "Rolprentvervaardigingsbedryf: Wysiging van die rolprentsubsidieskemas", 1 October 1981, p. 1-2.

²²¹ Franz Marx, interview by Coenraad J. Coetzee, Stellenbosch University, April 15, 2015.

²²² Elmo de Witt: former employee of *Kavalier Films*, whilst also producing and directing films through his own company such as *Kom tot Rus* (1977) and *Grensbasis 13* (1978). Manie van Rensburg: for example, director of the feature film *Die Square* (1977) in association with *Kavalier Films*, whilst also directing programmes in association with the SABC such as the TV movies *Die Perdesmous* (1981) and *Anna Meintjies* (1983). Koos Roets: for example, director of the feature film *Daar kom Tant Ralfe* (1976) and 13 episodes of the TV series, *Kooperasiestories*. Franz Marx: For example, director of the feature film *Netnou hoor die kinders* (1977) and the TV-series *Skooldae*. Arguably best known for producing M-Net's TV-soap opera *Egoli*.

²²³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 10, Memorandum: "Die Suid-Afrikaanse Filmbedryf", 14 March 1988, p. Appendix 1.

conventions more appropriate to the cinematic film genre.²²⁴ Arguably, these films exploited the market with some success. Many of these productions presented the narrative culminations of TV programmes. Consumers, who had invested time in the series, would feel obligated to see how the story concludes. For example, *Vyfster* was followed by a second series *Vyfster 2*. The motion picture *Vyfster: die slot* (translates to *Five Star: The Conclusion*) was produced in 1985. The 1981 subsidy amendments were, therefore, unsuccessful in changing the perspective of the industry. The situation which engulfed the industry was best illustrated when *Rapport*, an Afrikaans national newspaper which had since 1975 bestowed various annual ‘Oscars’ for local cinematic achievements (for example, Best Actor/Actress, Best Film, Best director and so forth), ended the award system in 1984.²²⁵ Although TV-based Afrikaans films are still frequently produced (examples include *Egoli: Afrikaners is Plesierig* [2010], *Getroud met Rugby: Die onvertelde storie* [2011] and *Molly and Wors* [2013]), their dominance of local productions culminated in 1984/85. This could be attributed to the SABC increasingly using its own facilities from 1983 onwards.²²⁶

Satbel Recovers from the Effects of Television

By June 1983 Ster-Kinekor’s average cinema attendance had dropped to 228 199 persons per week – or 51% less than the 1975 figure.²²⁷ However, as a result of the increase in admission fees and Satbel’s rationalisation, the company managed to recover from the effects of TV and the difficult economic climate, as illustrated in Table 34.

Table 34: ²²⁸ Satbel's Track Record from 1980 to 1983				
Year	1980	1981	1982	1983
Revenue (R'm)	53,9	63,9	80,2	93,3
Profit before Interest and Tax (R'000)	9 010	13 259	18 383	19 526
Attributable Profits (R'000)	4 947	7 221	9 665	10 136

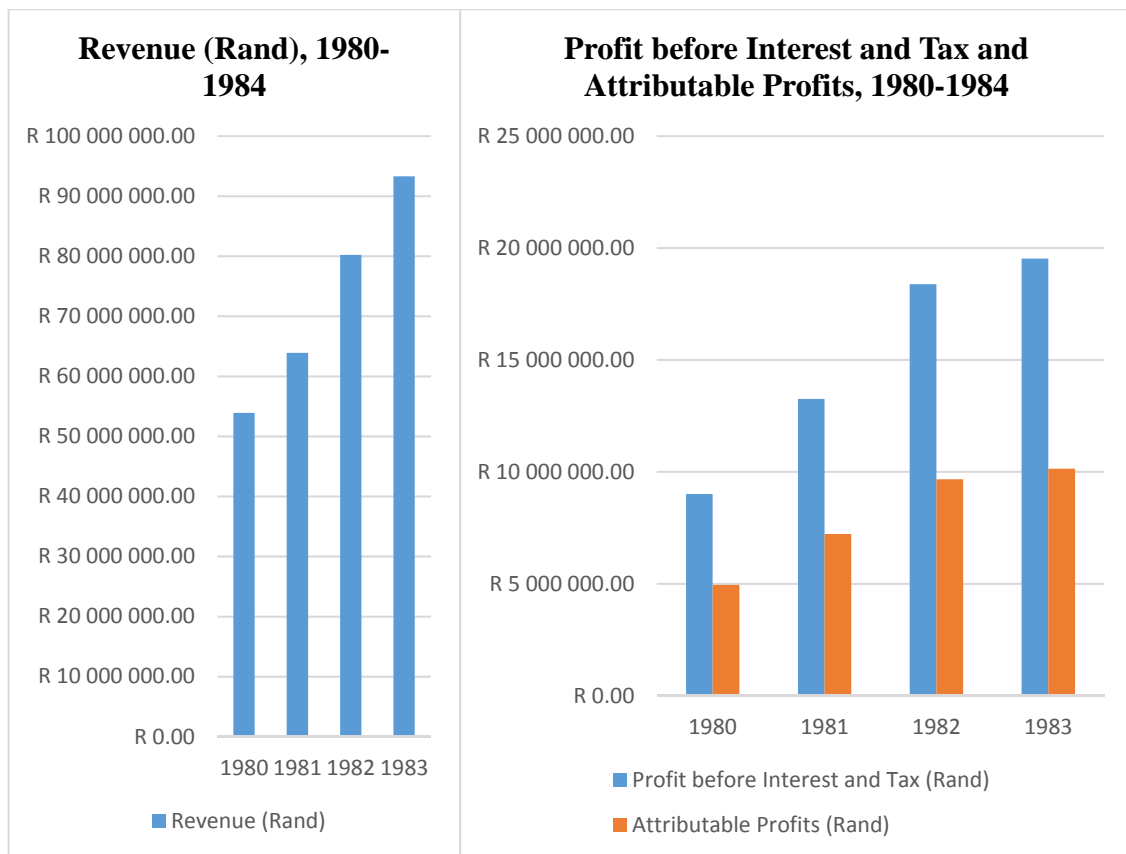
²²⁴ Leon van Nierop, *Daar Doer in die Fliek: 'n Persoonlike Blik op die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Rolprent*, (Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2016), p. 210.

²²⁵ Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 382.

²²⁶ The SABC utilised its own facilities because of the dire economic conditions in South Africa. See “Expansion of SABC-TV, 1981-1986”.

²²⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 3, Addendum: N101/3/1, Volume 8, Correspondence from Ster-Kinekor: “Rolprentsubsidieskema”, 14 October 1983, p. 2.

²²⁸ SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, Directors’ Meeting: “Satbel, FVB en Kersaf”, 19 September 1984, p. Appendix 1.



Therefore, Satbel's annual profits, taking inflation into account, had increased by approximately 37% from 1980. Up until 1984 the Anglo-American Organisation and Sanlam owned Satbel. However, *Federale Volksbeleggings Beperk* (FVB), a Sanlam subsidiary, acquired control over Satbel from 1983, as Sanlam argued that the investment company was better equipped to maintain financial stability.²²⁹ In September 1984 Sol Kerzner – son of Russian Jewish immigrants, a hotel and casino tycoon in southern Africa and owner of Kersaf Investments Ltd (Kersaf) – who owned a 34% interest in Sun International Ltd,²³⁰ approached FVB to acquire a controlling interest in Satbel. Kerzner's business proposition was approved, consequently providing Kersaf with a 40% interest in Satbel at a cost of R25 million.²³¹ The acquisition allowed Kerzner to increase his control over South Africa's leisure industry, whom himself speculated that Sun International shareholders' earnings could increase between 5%

²²⁹ SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel. Director's meeting: "Satbel en FVB", 17 August 1983, p. 1.

²³⁰ A resort hotel, casino and gaming chain from South Africa established in October 1983.

Sunday Express, September 23, 1984, Lawrence Bradford. "Sun shares set to rise as Sol goes to movies", 2.

²³¹ Sol Kerzner is perhaps best known for his role in the development of Sun City in North-West, South Africa. At the time, Sun City was located in the Bantustan, Bophuthatswana. As Bophuthatswana was declared an independent state by the South African government, entertainment - such as gambling - was permitted. Value in 2016 considering inflation: Approximately R335 million.

SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, Director's meeting: "Satbel en FVB", 17 Augustus 1983, p. 1.

and 10%. Although FVB still owned 40% of Satbel, the terms and conditions of the contract entailed that Satbel's managerial control would be transferred to Kersaf. Sanlam and the Anglo-American organisation each had a 9,7% interest in Satbel.²³²

Kersaf's takeover of Satbel's management (therefore including its subsidiaries, for example, Irene Film Laboratories, Satbel Films and Video RSA) led to a dramatic decrease in the control over the industry once asserted by Afrikaners. However, André Scholtz maintains that the Afrikaans cinematic film producer did not find it more difficult to get his/her film selected for distribution.²³³ South Africa's distribution and screening industries were dominated by Ster-Kinekor and UIP-Warner. In 1985 South Africa had 318 indoor cinemas and 133 drive-ins. Ster-Kinekor owned 100 cinemas and 51 drive-ins as opposed to UIP-Warner's 29 cinemas and a drive-in.²³⁴ UIP-Warner was formed as a result of United Artists' international arm amalgamating with CIC. Ster-Kinekor's cinema attendance did improve during 1986 as the figure rose by 5% according to then-MD, Anthony Salisbury, who attributed the increase to extensive TV and radio marketing.²³⁵

Possible Cinematic Film Production Recipes for Success in a TV-dominated Industry, 1984-1986

Approximately 20 A-scheme films were released between 1984 and 1986. Most cinematic productions were financial disappointments at the local box office. Films such as *Nag van Vrees*, *The Lion's Share*, *Die Groen Faktor* and *Magic is Alive my Friend* all failed to make a profit by 1988.²³⁶ Certain films produced in the 1980s reflected the gradual political transition experienced in South Africa under the leadership of P.W. Botha. In 1984 Satbel Films produced one of the last feature films directed by Jans Rautenbach. *Broer Matie* ("Brother Matie") is a melodrama in which a respected Afrikaner farmer, Matie (Joe Stewardson), of the Klein Karoo passed away in 1961, i.e. the height of Apartheid. In his will he declared that a Coloured pastor and childhood friend, Kieries Kammies (Simon Bruinders), had to conduct his funeral service. The white consistory was left to discuss the farmer's request, producing a complex tale of human relations. Ultimately, Kammies gets permission to lead the service after the church

²³² SA, Documents provided by Sanlam Archivist, Catherine Snel, Directors' Meeting: "Satbel, FVB en Kersaf", 19 September 1984, p. 1.

²³³ André Scholtz, e-mail message to Coenraad J. Coetzee, September 18, 2016.

²³⁴ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 10, Memorandum: "Die Suid-Afrikaanse Filmbedryf", 14 March 1988, p. 2.

²³⁵ *Financial Mail*, November 21, 1986, "Corporate Strategy: Let 'em roll", p. 88.

²³⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 10, Memorandum: "Die Suid-Afrikaanse Filmbedryf, 14 March 1988, p. Appendix 1.

members cast their ballots. *Broer Matie* encourages its viewer to identify with the characters supporting Maties's request since, according to William Pretorius, "these people [were] portrayed as enlightened heroes."²³⁷ Despite the film's approbation of Coloured and white relations and its critique of the 1960s political context, the PCB allowed its distribution and screening, as South Africa was undergoing drastic political and social changes. In 1983 the government introduced a new South African Constitution, which substituted the Westminster system with a tricameral parliament, in other words three race-based parliamentary chambers: whites (178 members in the House of Assembly), Coloureds (85 members in the House of Representatives) and Indians (45 members in the House of Delegates).²³⁸ Black South Africans were not represented as they were, in theory, deemed to be citizens of the 'autonomous' homelands. The system was controversial in many ways. For example, the right-wing Conservative Party, formed in 1982 by MPs who opposed P.W. Botha's power-sharing proposals and reform of apartheid policies, perceived the Tricameral Parliamentary System as a threat to white minority rule. At the opposite spectrum and despite the exclusion of blacks, the 1983 Constitution weakened parliament, as most of the authority was transferred to the newly created post of executive State President (at the same time abolishing the position of Prime Minister), who had the power to appoint the South African Cabinet. Furthermore, the Coloured and Indian Houses of Parliament, themselves being subordinated to the President, were less powerful than the House of Assembly.²³⁹

Broer Matie, meanwhile, could not duplicate the success of Rautenbach's *Katrina*.²⁴⁰ Including subsidy, the film made a loss of R205 138 by 1988.²⁴¹ Leon van Nierop remembers: "When I went to watch the film in the Cine 3... in the city centre of Johannesburg (where, decades ago, the old Empire [theatre] used to be), I was the only person there."²⁴² One can only speculate as to why *Broer Matie*, which had the same director and explored the same themes as *Katrina*, failed. Leon van Nierop states that some Afrikaans producers thought that only TV-derived films could reap substantial profits. However, the GBO revenue earned by *Boetie gaan Border*

²³⁷ Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 257.

²³⁸ M.C. Dempsey, *Die geskiedenis van die Raad van Verteenwoordigers as 'n administratiewe komponent van die Driekameralparlementstelsel in Suid-Afrika, 1984-1994*, (Ongepubliseerde PhD: Universiteit van Stellenbosch, 1999), p. 13.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14-15.

²⁴⁰ A 1969 film that reflected on the social and political position of the Coloured community (see Chapter Two).

²⁴¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 10, Memorandum: "Die Suid-Afrikaanse Filmbedryf", 14 March 1988, p. Appendix 1.

²⁴² Leon van Nierop, *Daar Doer in die Fliek: 'n Persoonlike Blik op die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Rolprent*, (Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2016), p. 221.

toe (1984) indicated that melodramas and light-hearted comedies may have lost their appeal amongst the Afrikaans community since family-friendly entertainment was already provided by SABC-TV. In addition, the fact that *Broer Matie* was released in a context in which white and Coloured relations were becoming more tolerated, resulted in the film not having the same shock value as *Katrina* did. Censorship regulations for SABC-TV were very strict during the 1980s, whilst those applying to the cinematic film industry became more lenient, as illustrated by *Boetie gaan Border toe*. This satirical film, produced by Philo Pieterse, directed by Regardt van der Bergh and starring Arnold Vosloo as Boetie van Tonder, revolves around a young spoiled Afrikaner, Boetie, who resisted military conscription. However, he reluctantly joins the military service after being bribed by his stepfather. Initially defying instructions, he ultimately graduates and subsequently gets deployed to Namibia during the Border War. In the climax of the film Boetie leads a counterattack against the enemy in an attempt to rescue Corporal Botes (Eric Nobbs). The mission is successful, with Boetie maturing into a leader.²⁴³ The harsh realities of military training and war were captured in the film. Additionally, the word “fok” was used.²⁴⁴ This might be seen as trivial in today’s context, but such on-screen profanity would not have been permitted in the 1960s and 1970s. Willie Esterhuizen, director of *Poena is Koning* (2007), best illustrated the point when he stated (at kykNET’s Silwerskermfees in 2013) that he always wanted to make a film in which the word could be used.²⁴⁵ A nude scene featuring Vosloo also appeared in the film. By 1988 the feature had earned R1,416 million in box office revenue, whilst its profit (subsidy included) of R712 721 nearly doubled *Skollie’s* (a TV-derived production) surplus, despite *Boetie gaan Border toe* being R46 410 less expensive to produce.²⁴⁶ The success of the film prompted the production of a sequel, *Boetie op Manoeuvres*, which was released in 1985 and also made a profit. Table 35 illustrates the number of films that received subsidy pay-outs from 1981/82-1985/86.

²⁴³ IMDD, “Boetie gaan Border toe (1984)”, Accessed: 18 December 2016: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0242321/synopsis?ref=tt_stry_pl.

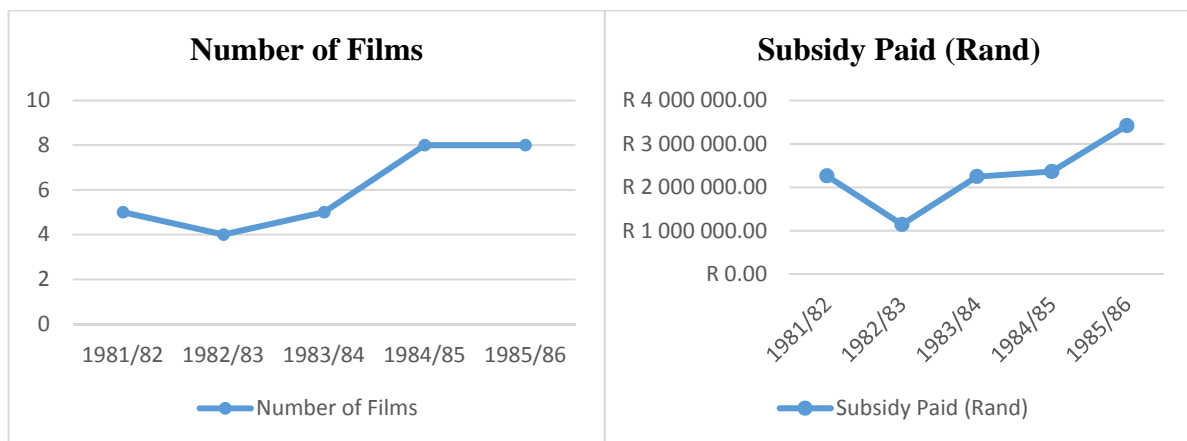
²⁴⁴ “Fuck”.

²⁴⁵ Leon van Nierop, *Daar Doer in die Fliek: ‘n Persoonlike Blik op die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Rolprent* (Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2016), p. 214.

²⁴⁶ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 10, Memorandum: “Die Suid-Afrikaanse Filmbedryf”, 14 March 1988, p. Appendix 1.

Table 35:²⁴⁷ Number of Films that Qualified for Subsidy Pay-outs (A-Scheme), 1979-1986

Fiscal Year	Films	Subsidy Paid by Government (Rand)
1981/82	5	2 264 035
1982/83	4	1 145 335
1983/84	5	2 248 616
1984/85	8	2 365 390
1985/86	8	3 421 573



Conclusion: A Change in Consumer Behaviour

In conclusion, a consequence of the introduction of the television service, according to Johan Blignaut, was that audiences of the Afrikaans cinematic industry became more sophisticated regarding cinematic taste, since SATV catered for the demand initially satisfied in local cinemas.²⁴⁸ In retrospect, the industry perhaps contributed in its own demise by producing content for SABC-TV (using their experience and resources to create, develop and enhance an already threatening local TV-industry). The state of the Afrikaans cinematic film producing industry in 1986 might have been different were producers to adopt the policies of Jamie Uys – in other words producing only cinematic features. However, Jamie Uys had resources and international acclaim – a vital aspect that most local producers lacked.

²⁴⁷ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 10, Memorandum: "Die Suid-Afrikaanse Filmbedryf", 14 March 1988, p. Appendix 2.

²⁴⁸ Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1991*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), p. 107.

An additional challenge, which initially contributed to its formation and development, faced the Afrikaans cinematic film industry. In the article “Are We Afrikaners Getting too Rich? Cornucopia and Change in Afrikanerdom in the 1960s” Albert Grundlingh demonstrates that Afrikaner economic advancement and the economic boom of the 1960s brought about a gradual shift in the patterns of Afrikaner consumer consumption.²⁴⁹ In short, many Afrikaners felt less (ideologically) obliged to consume a product produced by a fellow Afrikaner by the time of the introduction of SATV.²⁵⁰ This trend stemmed from Afrikaners increasingly occupying better-remunerated positions (skilled labour) fuelled by South Africa’s increasing economic prosperity. Afrikaners became more materialistic and so too did their pursuit of quality and status. This suggests one reason for the popularity of television (called a “status symbol” by *Volkshandel*)²⁵¹ amongst white South Africans and the significance of the modernisation of Ster-Kinekor’s cinema chain. Secondly, attention shifted from a focus on the group’s interests to the self, as many Afrikaners became more aware of preserving their own personal economic interests as oppose to – at least to some extent – those of other Afrikaners or the culture or the unity of Afrikaners. When asked about this, producer Franz Marx stated:

“Most Afrikaners did not focus on the wellbeing of the Afrikaner as a community – or rather it was not the main objective anymore. Afrikaners wanted to prosper [politically and economically] to better their own position... I get so annoyed when people say that it was in the interest of the Afrikaner as a collective. I have never had someone come up to me and say we must study so that ‘Afrikaners can be at the top’.”²⁵²

Considering these factors, one can argue that the ideal of South Africa having a flourishing Afrikaans cinematic film industry may have been less of a concern amongst Afrikaners during the late 1970s and 1980s as oppose to, for example, the period in which the A-subsidy scheme was first introduced.

²⁴⁹ See Chapter One (Afrikaner Economic Advancement) and Chapter Two (*Hoor my Lied* [1967]).

²⁵⁰ Albert Grundlingh, “Are we Afrikaners Getting too Rich?”, *Cornucopia and Change in Afrikanerdom in the 1960s*, *Journal of Historical Sociology* 21(2008), p. 148.

²⁵¹ See Chapter Four (Technical and Financial Aspects).

²⁵² Franz Marx, interview by Coenraad J. Coetzee, Stellenbosch University, April 15, 2015.

Final Thoughts

In analysing the influence of SATV on the Afrikaans cinematic industry, it was necessary to identify the intricacies of the socio-economic and political conditions within and encompassing the industry, as attempted in Chapters One and Two. In order for the industry to develop, state intervention was required; however, the subsidy scheme presented numerous complications. First, film subsidisation was intended to assist local producers in recovering their expenditures in an endeavour to compete with foreign products. Unfortunately, too many opportunities to exploit the system arose and consequently the image of the industry – despite numerous attempts to amend the scheme – suffered as a result. Furthermore, the continued production of features of a lower quality was ensured when Satbel, which deemed the circulation of local films a social responsibility, acquired control of the nation's distribution network. Despite distributing only those films perceived as profitable, most films were still of a sub-standard quality because of the local market's unwavering demand for locally produced films (until the introduction of television in 1976). This point was illustrated by films produced by *Kavalier Films*, an industry leader, which persisted in implementing the strategy of quantity over quality.

Second, the subsidy scheme, together with censorship regulations, allowed government to assert an undesirable degree of control over the industry as demonstrated during the production and distribution of *Debbie*, *Katrina* and *Ses Soldate*. Since television had such a profound impact on the production industry (as seen, for example, in the struggle between the private sector and the NFB), the exploitation of the B-scheme subsidy system was inevitable and serves as an example of producers endeavouring to produce films, not in the interest of developing local cinema, but purely for financial gain. Subsidy and censorship, in retrospect, thus guaranteed the production of films that failed to meet the standards of foreign products. As a result, apart from a few exceptions, local motion pictures could not successfully penetrate the international market, as foreign distributors would understandably choose to avoid the circulation of a sub-standard product. The introduction of SATV presented an opportunity for large-scale productions, which, apart from a handful of exceptions (such as *Mimosa* productions), never materialised, since South Africa's small white market remained the targeted consumer for most producers that ignored the utilisation of the B-scheme. In a speech delivered on 30 March 1988 (at a meeting held between the State President, P.W. Botha, and representatives of the film industry) Albie Venter (founder of *Brigadiers Films*) argued:

“... and products of quality requires money. Therefore, I [a producer] must accumulate millions of Rand, (the average American film costs \$13 000 000 excluding marketing, the blockbuster \$25 000 000) and that is more than what most of us have to put at risk.”¹

Consequently, many producers were forced to approach investors in an attempt to invest substantial amounts of capital in a project. This was a difficult undertaking, since the risk of an international box office failure was (and still is) very high:

“...out of every ten films developed [before and including 1988], five were failures, three narrowly managed to make a profit and two can be deemed as successes.”²

This fear of failure prompted a conservative attitude of rigidity amongst producers, therefore discouraging trial and error. Trial and error was perhaps, at least in hindsight, most needed in the Afrikaans cinematic producing industry.

According to Boet Troskie (Mimosa Films), an additional reason for Hollywood’s dominance of the global industry stemmed from America’s ability to market a product/film more sufficiently than South Africa’s cinematic industry. He reasoned that the competition in the international communications industry (of which cinema forms part) was highly competitive – even ruthless – and access to the international market was determined by the profitability of a product:

“Therefore, quality rather than morality is the key ... The international communication game is played by professional players according to a certain set of rules, and we are anything but professional.”³

Yet producing films for South Africa’s white audience produced a new set of challenges as consumer patterns were shifting within an economic environment that – because of increased hostility in the country and abroad towards apartheid (sanctions, etc.) intensified the difficulty of adapting and functioning as a prosperous company.

¹ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 10, Speech made by Albie Venter at a meeting held between the State President, P.W. Botha, and representatives of the Film Industry at Tuynhuys, Cape Town: “Staatspresident se beraad met die rolprentbedryf op 30 Maart 1988: Die Internasionale Rolprent”, 30 March 1988, p. 4.

² *Ibid.*

³ SAB, Home Affairs: Film Industry (BNF), 9, Addendum: N101/3/2, Volume 10, Speech made by Boet Troskie at a meeting held between the State President, P.W. Botha, and representatives of the Film Industry at Tuynhuys, Cape Town: “Staatspresident se beraad met die rolprentbedryf op 30 Maart 1988: Die Bemaking en Verspreiding van Rolprente”, 30 March 1988, p. 3.

The paramount test facing the industry, even before the SABC made its first television broadcasts, was the size of the local market. Since the content of the SABC's programmes were highly regulated, both SATV and the Afrikaans cinematic film industry offered basically the same product – albeit through different technologies. The main difference, naturally, was a question of convenience. The unexpected popularity of SATV in the white market, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, only intensified the direct competition of the SABC. Both government and the Afrikaans production industry were responsible for the industry's failure to adapt. Foreign case studies, such as those focused on Hollywood, indicated that incorporating content that distinguished the cinema experience from television viewing, through either themes or enhanced quality, would draw audiences – considering that the local market became increasingly visually literate after the introduction of SATV. The local box office successes of *Boetie Gaan Border Toe* and *The Gods Must Be Crazy* serves as examples. However, censorship regulations (and consequently, a shortage of stories/scripts which could be converted into features) and Afrikaans producers' reluctance to invest substantial amounts of capital in local productions made the survival of the industry more precarious. Despite being profitable, the production of TV-derived productions offered its own set of complications. Apart from copying television filming techniques (which according to critics further damaged the image of the production industry), the number of TV programmes which could have been converted into features was limited.

The impact of SATV also demonstrated the importance of preparation and perhaps indicated a reason for the recovery of Satbel's distribution and exhibition network – despite apartheid laws prohibiting racially integrated audiences until the mid-1980s. A number of factors should be taken into account here. Satbel was a subsidiary of established companies – Sanlam, the Schlesinger Organisation, FVB and Anglo-American – that had a firm understanding of South African consumer trends and, importantly, extensive financial resources. When three-quarters of South Africa's distribution and screening interests were bought from Twentieth-Century-Fox in 1969, Satbel immediately proposed a four-step rationalisation plan to adapt to the threats posed by television, i.e. the company had a clear vision to follow. It is important to note that the consolidation of its shares commenced even before television was officially announced in 1971, thus showing its eagerness to adapt. Apart from diversifying its operations, which – in turn – guaranteed an extra stream of income, Satbel's modernisation of its chain of cinemas (quality over quantity) and the integration of cinemas into large-scale retail and leisure developments attracted more consumers. From a consumer's perspective, enhancing the

cinematic experience justified the increase in admission fees. Understandably, in terms of screening, four-wall/indoor cinemas became the focus of operations, as drive-ins – once considered a family activity but now replaced by television – failed to accumulate the kind of income once generated during the pre-TV era. Furthermore, South African distributors and exhibitors could circulate and exhibit both local and international productions – the latter in particular had improved considerably as foreign producers (particularly Hollywood) had raised the quality of their films since the 1970s (see Chapter Five).

On the other hand, and contributing to the downfall of the Afrikaans production industry, as demonstrated in Chapters Four and Five, was the industry's over-reliance on assistance from the SABC and the government. One can speculate that the industry's dependence stemmed from past experience, with subsidies being so readily available. Whatever the case may be, the assistance/employment offered by the SABC (which was perceived by cinematic producers as additional income) during the preparation phase and after the introduction of SATV, failed to meet expectations. As a result, producers – such as *Kavalier Films* – were inadequately prepared to face the impact of television. Whether the SABC should be held responsible, in terms of the number of opportunities the corporation offered to the private sector, depends on the approach of one's argument. When drawing conclusions from Chapter Three (The Advent of South Africa's Television Services, c.1924 - c.1971), it becomes clear that acting as a broadcaster in South Africa (considering its demography, geographical issues, etc.) also presented significant challenges as the objective was to remain economically stable. Therefore, the SABC's utilisation of its own facilities and the amount of remuneration paid to the private sector is understandable – particularly during the 1980s when economic conditions worsened, as seen in Chapter Five. Naturally, the South African Broadcasting Corporation would rather ensure its own existence.

To conclude, business adaptation, which Satbel managed to utilise as a strategy, was therefore a prerequisite. Business models require constant adaptation as they are continuously confronted with uncertainties and ambiguities. Market tastes, for example (as illustrated by Albert Grundlingh [see Chapters Two and Five]) are constantly changing. Unfortunately, the restrictions discussed here – be they social, political or economic forces – meant that the Afrikaans film production industry struggled to adjust to the challenges presented by the SABC's television services.

OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Since this analysis primarily considers the influence of SABC-TV on the Afrikaans cinematic film industry until 1986, the introduction and impact of pay-TV, in other words, M-Net and Digital Satellite Television ([DStv] launched in 1995), provides an opportunity for further research. Additional factors need consideration, the most significant of which are: the changing face of South African politics – i.e. the end of apartheid and its socio-economic consequences; the exploitation of South Africa's tax laws by local and foreign film producers from 1987 to 1990; an industry in which women fulfilled an increasingly significant function (Katinka Heyns, for example, became a leading South African director and producer);⁴ the launch of e.tv in 1998;⁵ the establishment of the NuMetro Cinema Group in 1987; Ster-Kinekor's temporary expansion to Europe in the 1990s; and the role played by videotapes (later DVDs) and the Internet.

⁴ For example, Heyns directed *Fiela se Kind* (1988), whilst acting as a producer of features such as *Paljas* (1992), which she also directed.

⁵ e.tv is the fifth terrestrial TV channel launched in South Africa and became the country's first privately owned yet "free-to-air" TV station.

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APPENDIX**A Chronology of Feature Films Produced in South Africa, 1956-1986¹****1956***By an African Camp Fire**Die Groot Wit Voël**Paul Kruger***1957***Dis Lekker om te Lewe**Donker Afrika***1958***Come Back Africa**Die Bosvelders**Die Sewende Horison**Ek sal Opstaan**Fratse van die Vloot**Goddelse Stad**Nor the Moon by Night**The Michaels in Africa***1959***Desert Inn**Die Wilde Boere**Nooi van my Hart**Piet se Tante**Satanskoraal***1960***Bloedrooi Papawer**Die Jagters**Die Vlugteling**Hou die Blinkkant Bo**Kyk na die Sterre**Last of the Few**Oupa en die Plaasnooientjie**Rip van Wyk***1961***Basie**Boerboel de Wet**Diamante is Troewe**Diamonds are Dangerous**Die Bubbles Schroeder Storie**Die Hele Dorp Weet**Dooskry is Min**Drums of Destiny**En die Vonke Spat**Gevaarlike Reis**Hands of Space**Hans en die Rooinek**Kalahari**Magic Garden**Moord in Kompartement 1001
E**Skadu van Gister**Spore in die Modder**The Hellions**Tremor as die Aarde Skeur***1962***As Ons Twee Getroud is**Die Tweede Slaapkamer**Geheim van Onderplaas**Gevaarlike Spel**Jy's Lieflik Vanaand**Lord Oom Piet**Man in die Donker**Murudruni**Savage Africa**Skelm van die Limpopo**Strpers van die Laeveld**Tom, Dirk en Herrie**Voor Sononder***1963***Die Reën Kom Weer**Gee My Jou Hand**Huis op Horings**Journey to Nowhere**Kimberley Jim**Ruiter in die Nag**The Lion Speaks***1964***Die Wonderwêreld van
Kammie Kamfer**Dingaka*

¹ Leon van Nierop, *Daar Doer in die Fliek: 'n Persoonlike Blik op die Geskiedenis van die Afrikaanse Rolprent*, (Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis, 2016), 455-466. Martin Botha & Johan Blignaut, *Movies Moguls Mavericks: South African Cinema 1979-1981*, (Cape Town: Showdata, 1992), F1-F91. Keyan Tomaselli, *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film*, (London: Routledge, 1989), 261-270. Martin Botha, *South African Cinema, 1896-2010*, (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 259-280.

Piet se Niggie

Rhino

Sanders of the River

Seven Against the Sun

Table Bay

The Foster Gang

1965

Coast of Skeletons

Debbie

King Hendrik

Ride the High Wind

Tokoloshe

Voortreflike Famalie Smit

1966

Africa Shades

All the Way to Paris

Die Kavaliers

Mozambique

Operation Yellow Viper

Sands of the Kalahari

The Diamond Walkers

The Naked Pray

The Second Sin

Zulu

1967

Bennie Boet

Die Jakkels van Tula Metsi

Die Kruger-miljoene

Die Wilde Seisoen

Escape Route Cape Town

Hoor My Lied

In die Lente van Ons Liefde

Professor en die Prikkelpop

The Scavengers

1968

Die Kandidaat

Dr Kalie

Find Livingstone

Jy is My Liefing

King of Africa

Majuba

One of the Pot

Oupa for Sale

Raka

The Long Red shadow

The Mercenaries

Twee Broeders Ry Saam

1969

A Twist of Sand

Danie Bosman

Die Vervlakste Tweeling

Dirkie

Geheim van Nantes

Joanna

Katrina

Petticoat Safari

Staal Burger

Stadig oor die Klippe

Strangers at Sunrise

Vrolike Vrydag

1970

Banana Beach

Drie van der Merwes

Forgotten Summer

Haak Vrystaat

Hulde Versteeg MD

Jannie Totsiens

Knockout

Lied in My Hart

Onwettige Huwelik

Ryan's Daughter

Satan's Harvest

Scotty Smith

Shangani Patrol

Sien Jou Môre

Sieraad uit As

Stop Exchange

Taxi

Vicki

1971

A New Life

Breekpunt

Die Banneling

Die Erfgenaam

Die Lewe Sonder Jou

Flying Squad

Freddie's in Love

Gold Squad

Lindie

Mr Kingstreet's War

Pappalap

Presurre Burst

Sononder

Soul Africa

The Men from the Ministry

Three Bullets for a Long Gun

Zebra

1972

Afrika!

Boemerang 11:15

Creatures the World Forgot

Die Marmepoel

Die Wildtemmer

Just Call me Lucky

K9 Baaspatrolliehond

Kaptein Caprivi

Liefde vir Lelik

Makulu

Man van Buite

My Broer se Bril

Next Stop Makouvlei

Pikkie Leatherlip

Salomien Lokval in Venesië

Skat van Issie

*Spërregebied: Diamond Area
No. 1*

The Last Lion

The Manipulator

The Winners

Vlug van die Seemeeu

Weekend

1973

Aanslag op Kariba

Africa

Afspraak in die Kalahari

Boesman en Lena

Die Bankrower

Die Sersant en die Tiger Moth

Die Spook van Donkergat

Die Voortrekkers

Die Wit Sluier

Dog Squad

From Rags to Riches

*Groetnis vir die Eerste
Minister*

Insident op Paradusstrand

Jamie 21

Môre Môre

Siener van die Suburbs

Skaduwees oor Brugplaas

Snip en Rissiepit

The Baby Game

The Big Game

*The Brave, the Rough and the
Raw*

1974

Babbelkous en Bruidegom

Bait

Beautiful People

Boland

Call Me Lucky

Cry Me a Teardrop

Dans van die Vlammink

Die Afspraak

Die Kwikstertjie

Die Saboteurs

Dooie Duikers Deel nie

Fraud

Funeral for an Assassin

Geluksdal

Gold

Joe Bullet

Land Apart

Met Liefde van Adele

Nogomopho

Oh Brother

Ongewenste Vreemdeling

Pens en Pooitjies

Savage Sport

Skadus van Gister

Sonneblom uit Parys

Suster Tharesa

Tant Ralie se Losieshuis

The Virgin Goddess

Those Naughty Angels

Vang vir My 'n Droom

Voorvlugtige Spioen

Vreemde Wêreld

Vrou uit die Nag

1975

Daan en Doors oppie dieggins

Daar Kom Tant Ralie

De Wet's Spoor

Diamond Hunters

Die Rebel

Die Square

Diebare Diplomat

Dingetjie is Dynamite

e' Lolipop

Eendag op 'n Reëndag

Indedama

*Jakkalsdraai se Mense
Trompie*

Kniediep

Lelik is My Offer

Liefste Veertjie

<i>Ma Skryf Matriek</i>	<i>Liefste madalein</i>	<i>Tears for a Killar</i>
<i>Maxhosa</i>	<i>Mahlomola</i>	<i>The Angola File</i>
<i>Mirage Eskader</i>	<i>My Liedjie van Verlange</i>	<i>Wangeza</i>
<i>My Naam is Dingetjie</i>	<i>Ngaka</i>	<i>Wild Geese</i>
<i>Olie Kolonie</i>	<i>Ngwanaka</i>	<i>Winners II</i>
<i>Sarah</i>	<i>Ridder van die Grootpad</i>	1978
<i>Sell a Million</i>	<i>Sestig Jaar van John Vorster</i>	<i>'n Sederval in Waterkloof</i>
<i>Ses Soldate</i>	<i>Springbok</i>	<i>Abafana</i>
<i>Seuns uit die Wolke</i>	<i>Terrorist</i>	<i>Abashokobezi</i>
<i>Shout at the Devil</i>	<i>Thaba</i>	<i>Billy Boy</i>
<i>Soekie</i>	<i>The Boxer</i>	<i>Decision to Die</i>
<i>Somer</i>	<i>The South Africans</i>	<i>Diamante n die Dief</i>
<i>Terwille van Christene</i>	<i>The Sportsman</i>	<i>Dr Marais Hugo</i>
<i>Troudag van Tant Ralie</i>	<i>Tigers don't Cry</i>	<i>Iemand Soos Jy</i>
<i>U-Deliwe</i>	<i>Vergeet My Nie</i>	<i>Luki</i>
<i>Voortreflike Familie Smit</i>	1977	<i>Moloyi</i>
<i>Wat Maak Oom Kalie Daar</i>	<i>Crazy People</i>	<i>Nicolene</i>
1976	<i>Die Besoeker</i>	<i>Nokf</i>
<i>'n Beeld vir Jeannie</i>	<i>Die Winter van 14 Julie</i>	<i>Seipana</i>
<i>'n Sondag in September</i>	<i>Dingitjie en Idi</i>	<i>Sonja</i>
<i>Accident of War</i>	<i>Dit was Aand en dit was Môre</i>	<i>Spaanse Vlieg</i>
<i>Death of a Snowman</i>	<i>Escape from Angola</i>	<i>The Advocate</i>
<i>Die Vlindervanger</i>	<i>Golden Rendezvous</i>	<i>The Pawn</i>
<i>Erfgoed is Sterfgoed</i>	<i>Inyakanyaka</i>	<i>Utsotsi</i>
<i>Funny People</i>	<i>Irma</i>	<i>Vuma</i>
<i>Glenda</i>	<i>Iziduphunga</i>	<i>Vyfde Seisoen</i>
<i>Hank, Hennery and Friend</i>	<i>Kom tot Rus</i>	<i>Witblitz en Peach Brandy</i>
<i>How Long</i>	<i>Kootjie Emmer</i>	1979
<i>I-Kati Elimnyana</i>	<i>Lag met Wena</i>	<i>Botsotso</i>
<i>Inkunzi</i>	<i>Mapule</i>	<i>Charlie word 'n Ster</i>
<i>Isimanga</i>	<i>Mooimeisiefontein</i>	<i>Eensame Vlug</i>
<i>Karate Olympia</i>	<i>Netnou Hoor die Kinders</i>	<i>Elsa se Geheim</i>
<i>Killer Force</i>	<i>Suffer Little Children</i>	<i>Follow that Rainbow</i>

<i>Forty Days</i>	<i>Rienie</i>	<i>Isiqhwaga</i>
<i>Game for Vultures</i>	<i>Shamwari</i>	<i>Pina Ya Qetelo</i>
<i>Grensbasis 13</i>	<i>Sing vir die Harlekyn</i>	<i>Ubede Abuphangwa</i>
<i>Herfsland</i>	<i>Skelms</i>	<i>Ukulwa</i>
<i>Ingilosi Yokufa</i>	<i>The Demon</i>	<i>Umdlalo Umkhulu</i>
<i>Isoka</i>	<i>The Gods Must Be Crazy</i>	<i>Umjuluko Me Gazi</i>
<i>Mightyman I</i>	<i>Umbdhale</i>	<i>Verkeerde Nommer</i>
<i>Mightyman II</i>	<i>Umdladi</i>	<i>Will to Win</i>
<i>Phindesela</i>	<i>Umona</i>	1983
<i>Plekkie in die Son</i>	<i>Zulu Dawn</i>	<i>Amazing Grace</i>
<i>Pretoria O Pretoria</i>	1981	<i>Botsotso 3</i>
<i>Umunt Akalahlwa</i>	<i>A Way of Life</i>	<i>Funny People II</i>
<i>Umzingeli</i>	<i>Beloftes van M^ôre</i>	<i>Geel Trui vir 'n Wenner</i>
<i>Wat Jy Saai</i>	<i>Birds of Paradise</i>	<i>Impumelelo</i>
<i>Weerskant die Nag</i>	<i>Blink Stefaans</i>	<i>Inyembezi Zami</i>
1980	<i>Dumela San</i>	<i>Iziphukuphuku</i>
<i>A Savage encounter</i>	<i>Inkada</i>	<i>Joe Slaughter</i>
<i>April 1980</i>	<i>Isiganga</i>	<i>Johnny Tough</i>
<i>Baeng</i>	<i>Iwisa</i>	<i>Mmampodi</i>
<i>Biza Izintombi</i>	<i>Nommer Asseblief</i>	<i>Motsumi</i>
<i>Botsotso 2</i>	<i>So-Manga</i>	<i>My Country my Hat</i>
<i>Burning Rubber</i>	<i>Sonto</i>	<i>Ndinguwakabani</i>
<i>Confetti Breakfast</i>	<i>Tommy</i>	<i>Ngavele Ngasho</i>
<i>Flashpoint Africa</i>	<i>Ukusindiswa</i>	<i>Running Young</i>
<i>Gemini</i>	<i>Umnyakazo</i>	<i>The Riverman</i>
<i>Hippo</i>	<i>Ungavimbi Umculo</i>	<i>Tommy 2</i>
<i>Iqhawe</i>	<i>Vimba Isipoko</i>	<i>Tora Ya Raditeble</i>
<i>Kiepie en Kandas</i>	1982	<i>Vakasha</i>
<i>Kill and Kill Again</i>	<i>Blood Money</i>	<i>Washo Ubaba</i>
<i>Marigolds in August</i>	<i>Bosveld Hotel</i>	<i>Whose Child Am I?</i>
<i>'n Brief vir Simone</i>	<i>Bullet on the Run</i>	<i>Why Forsake Me?</i>
<i>Night of the Puppets</i>	<i>Doctor Luke</i>	<i>Wolhaarstories</i>
<i>Rally</i>	<i>Impango</i>	1984

<i>Ace of Spades</i>	<i>Odirang</i>	<i>Abathumbi</i>
<i>Bank Busters</i>	<i>One More Shot</i>	<i>Allegra</i>
<i>Bird Boy</i>	<i>Playing Dirty</i>	<i>Amagoduku</i>
<i>Bobo mo Motseng</i>	<i>Point of Return</i>	<i>Amahlaya</i>
<i>Boetie Gaan Border Toe</i>	<i>Run for Freedom</i>	<i>Amaphoyisana</i>
<i>Boiphetso</i>	<i>Sanna</i>	<i>Bad Company</i>
<i>Bona Manzi</i>	<i>Skollie</i>	<i>Bhema</i>
<i>Bozo and Bimbo</i>	<i>Slow versus Boner</i>	<i>Big Land</i>
<i>Broer Matie</i>	<i>Starbound</i>	<i>Black Magic</i>
<i>Charlie Steel</i>	<i>Stoney, the One and Only</i>	<i>Blue Vultures</i>
<i>Cold Blood</i>	<i>Survival Zone</i>	<i>Boetie op Manoeuvres</i>
<i>Crime Doesn't Pay</i>	<i>Survival Zone</i>	<i>Contact</i>
<i>Die Groen Faktor</i>	<i>Tawwe Tienies</i>	<i>Deadly Passion</i>
<i>Dien Groen Faktor</i>	<i>Tawwe Tienies</i>	<i>Diamond catch</i>
<i>Double Deal</i>	<i>The Banana Gang</i>	<i>Diamonds for Dinner</i>
<i>Fanakalo</i>	<i>The Cross</i>	<i>Die Strandloper</i>
<i>For Money and Glory</i>	<i>The Hitch-Hikers</i>	<i>Eendag vir Altyd</i>
<i>Honour Thy Father</i>	<i>The Midnight Caller</i>	<i>Emgodini</i>
<i>I Will Repay</i>	<i>The Musicmaker</i>	<i>Fist Fighter</i>
<i>Imali</i>	<i>The Reckoning</i>	<i>Foul Play</i>
<i>Inyoka</i>	<i>The Spin of Death</i>	<i>Getting Lucky</i>
<i>Iqhawe 2</i>	<i>Ulaka</i>	<i>Guquka</i>
<i>Isalamusi</i>	<i>Ulindiwe</i>	<i>Herd of Drums</i>
<i>Isithixo Segolide</i>	<i>Umbodi</i>	<i>Hotter than Snow</i>
<i>Iso Ngeso</i>	<i>Umfana</i>	<i>Ihlathi Lezimanga</i>
<i>Izigedengu</i>	<i>Umfana II</i>	<i>Iholide</i>
<i>Mathata</i>	<i>Upondo No Nkinsela</i>	<i>Impindiso</i>
<i>Mission Spellbound</i>	<i>Usiko Lwabafana</i>	<i>Imusi</i>
<i>Modise</i>	<i>Winner Take All</i>	<i>Indlela</i>
<i>Moon Mountain</i>	<i>Yonna Lefatseng</i>	<i>Indlu Yedimoni</i>
<i>Mr Moonlight</i>	<i>Zero for Zep</i>	<i>Innocent Revenge</i>
<i>Never Rob a Magician</i>	1985	<i>Intaba Yegolide</i>
<i>Night of Terror</i>	<i>Abathakathi</i>	<i>Iphutha</i>

<i>Iqaba</i>	<i>Somhlolo</i>	<i>Uxolo</i>
<i>Isinamuva</i>	<i>Somoholo 2</i>	<i>Uzungu</i>
<i>Isipho Sezwa</i>	<i>Sonny</i>	<i>Van der Merwe P.I.</i>
<i>Johnny Diamini</i>	<i>Spider</i>	<i>Visitors</i>
<i>Joker</i>	<i>Stepmother</i>	<i>Vulane</i>
<i>Kidnapped</i>	<i>Survival 1</i>	<i>Vyfster: Die Slot</i>
<i>Lana</i>	<i>Survival 2</i>	<i>Wie Laaste Lag</i>
<i>Love in the Wood</i>	<i>Taste of Blood 2</i>	<i>Wind Rider</i>
<i>Lucky</i>	<i>The Ace</i>	<i>Witch Doctor</i>
<i>Magic is Alive, My Friends</i>	<i>The Comedians</i>	<i>Yolaleko</i>
<i>Magic Ring</i>	<i>The Dealer</i>	<i>You're in the Movies</i>
<i>Mamza</i>	<i>The Judgement</i>	1986
<i>Mapansula 2</i>	<i>The Last Run</i>	<i>Abaphangi</i>
<i>Mapantsula</i>	<i>The Lion's Share</i>	<i>Ben Bonzo and Big Bad Joe</i>
<i>Menzi and Menziwa</i>	<i>The Long Run</i>	<i>City of Blood</i>
<i>Mmila we Bakwetidi</i>	<i>The Man</i>	<i>Dada en die Flower</i>
<i>Mohlalifi</i>	<i>The Moment of Truth</i>	<i>Dirty Money</i>
<i>Mountain of Hell</i>	<i>The Murderer</i>	<i>Eyewitness</i>
<i>Mr. TNT</i>	<i>The Scoop</i>	<i>Friend's Brothers</i>
<i>Nkululeko</i>	<i>The Taste of Blood</i>	<i>Jake Speed</i>
<i>No One Cries Forever</i>	<i>Thor</i>	<i>Jock of the Bushveld</i>
<i>Palao E Makatsang</i>	<i>Too Late for Haven</i>	<i>Juluka</i>
<i>Phindisela</i>	<i>Torak</i>	<i>Just Desserts</i>
<i>Ransom</i>	<i>Tresurre Hunt</i>	<i>Lair of the Hyena</i>
<i>Rescuers</i>	<i>Tselend Ya Bonokwane</i>	<i>Liewe Hemel, Genis!</i>
<i>Revenge</i>	<i>Ukuphindisela</i>	<i>Lindiwe</i>
<i>Revenge is Mine</i>	<i>Ukuvuleka</i>	<i>Long Distance Runner</i>
<i>Rough Nights in Paradise</i>	<i>Ukuzingela</i>	<i>Love in the Wood</i>
<i>Say-mama</i>	<i>Ulanga</i>	<i>Love in the Wood II</i>
<i>Seganana</i>	<i>Ulunya of Lohlanga</i>	<i>Mobsters</i>
<i>Sekebekwa</i>	<i>Umfana</i>	<i>Mountain of Hell</i>
<i>Sixpence</i>	<i>Umoni</i>	<i>Nag van Vrees</i>
<i>Skating on Thin Uys</i>	<i>Umsizi</i>	<i>Place of Weeping</i>

Profit and Lost

Raw Terror

Ring of Fire

Robin Muir

Run for Your Life

Runner Up

Satan Shutes

Shiyiwe

Singabahabayo

Slip Up

Strike Back

Strike Force

Tap and Son

Taste of Blood II

Taxi War

Tenth of a Second

The Hand

The Tiger and Kid Gang

The Wedding

Tholiwe

Tip and Tap in the Haunted House

Tip Meets Tap

Tojan

Tommy Le Segotsana

Under Suspicion

Vengeance

Wipe Out

You Gotta Be Crazy

You Must Be Joking